THREE PLAYS FOR PATRIOTS

BY N·A·BENSON

C. W. JEFFERY

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To LEONARD J. RYAN

In memory of a crusade or two
against invulnerable windmills.

These plays deal respectively with men who were thwarted in their final purposes, perhaps by the virtues of courage, idealism, and integrity resident in the character of each.

TO THE FAILURES.

(the time of Canada's Diamond Jubilee of Confederation.)

In this, our time of young magnificence
When cannons echo and broad banners stream,
Let us foregather in deep reverence
Above the ancient tombs of long-dead dream
Where ripens the high dust of common men
Who visioned this Day's pride in ages past,
Who rose unsummoned, and lay down again,
Sealed our first noble power with their last.

Their legioned names and virtues sleep untold,
They trod a bitter path from birth to death,
But all the hills are richer by their gold
And all the winds blow stronger by their breath.
Their deeds were dreams of splendour that we
own,
Dreams of immortals, graveless and unknown.

OTTAWA.
July 1, 1927.

"The Paths of Glory"	1812.
The Patriot	1837.
The Leather Medal	1927.

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"THE PATHS OF GLORY"

1812

Cast.

(This play was first presented on Feb. 15, 1927, by the Players Guild of University College, Toronto, with the following cast:

Brock ..... *Stephen H. Dale*
Macdonell ..... *Raymond Card*
Sheaffe ..... *Earl Fauman*
Darras ..... *N. A. Benson*
Fitzgibbon ..... *Patrick Ussher*
Evans ..... *J. H. Walkinshaw*
Dean ..... *Louis Golden*

The play was first published by the Toronto Star Weekly, July 14, 1928)

"THE PATHS OF GLORY"

The night of Monday, October the twelfth, of the year 1812. Eleven-thirty on this night of bitter autumn wind, and driving rain. The general's room in Fort George at the mouth of the Niagara River. The room is large and very meagrely furnished. On the left wall there is a rough fireplace, in which glow the embers of a dying fire. On the shelf above the fireplace is a portrait of His Majesty, George the Third, draped with a British flag. In the corner is a rough camp-bed and in the wall at its foot a rectangular barred window whose dull black curtains flutter in the wind. To the left of the window a great map of the Canadas is nailed to the wall, which, save for the map and portrait, is bare, cold and gray. Placed lengthwise is a great rough table bearing a candle. On the table several dispatch-boxes and a pile of papers. In a chair on the right hand side of the table sits Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock, already a Knight of the Bath, but unaware of the

honour which he never lives to learn. His arms are thrown across the table and his massive head rests on them in the deep sleep of utter exhaustion. He has been writing a letter and the quill pen is still in his fingers. On the table beside his arm is his sword and on it his great cocked hat. Beside the door on the right a grim oaken clock is ticking stolidly.

There is a knock at the door. Brock stirs, raises his great fair-haired head, and draws his hand across his forehead. He is a man in the prime of life, and physically magnificent. He has the gray blue eyes of the Anglo-Saxon, but under these are dark circles of fatigue. Quickly he folds his letter, puts it inside his coat, and calls in an even voice:

Come in.

(Lieut.-Col. John Macdonell enters, a tall blue-eyed, sandy-haired Scotsman, slow in his speech. He is but twenty-five years of age, and slightly less tall than his commander. He salutes.)

Brock: Well, Macdonell, it is rather late

for you to be about, especially after the day you've had. What can I do for you?

MACDONELL: It's a private matter, sir. But

BROCK: Well, sit down, man, for a moment. Why, you're soaking wet! Have you been out in it all night?

MACDONELL: I have, sir.

BROCK: I relieved you of duty at five. You had no need to be out. You and I and all of us will need all our strength for to-morrow. Why waste it now? Where on earth have you been, man?

MACDONELL: I've been out sitting on the cliffs all night, sir.

BROCK: In heaven's name, what for?

MACDONELL: I've been talking with Darras. (*He is uneasy*).

BROCK: Why?

MACDONELL: I'm afraid for him, sir. I'm afraid. And I would ask you, sir, if a subordinate may make such a request of his superior—

BROCK *(going up to him)*: You are my friend, lad, not my servant. Ask of me what you will. If it is in the bounds of reason, it shall be done.

MACDONELL: Sir, it is a serious business. Would you—would you—consider, sir, not to mention a word of what I say to you, unless it is absolutely imperative?

BROCK: What is it, man? Out with it!

MACDONELL: It's Darras, sir. He—

BROCK: Macdonell—your face tells me that something serious is in the wind. What is the matter with Lieutenant Darras?

MACDONELL: Is he valuable to you, sir?

BROCK: Of course. Darras is the best officer in the militia. He joined the York Volunteers three months ago, learned more soldiering in those weeks than many a man of the 49th learns in a year. After the brush at Maguago where his brother was killed, he was outstanding in the action on the Canard—the boy bore himself so well that I made him a lieutenant in

the Volunteers. Brave as a lion, a crack shot, thinks quickly—

MACDONELL: That's it, sir, he thinks—too much.

BROCK: What is it? *(Macdonell hesitates.)* Out with it!

MACDONELL: He—he's dissatisfied, sir.

BROCK: Show me a soldier who isn't that at some time and I'll show you an angel. What is he dissatisfied with?

MACDONELL: Don't treat him too hard, sir—he's my friend. He's a good soldier, but he hates the colonel.

BROCK: Sheaffe?

MACDONELL: Yes, sir. *(Brock pauses.)*

BROCK: Well—tell me, what is it? That private's lashes?

MACDONELL: Yes.

BROCK *(rising to his full height and banging his fist on the table)*: By the Lord Harry!

It was too severe—Sheaffe will never understand—you cannot treat men like dogs and make good soldiers of them. That's a Russian trick. I saw enough of it at Egmont-op-Zee. Was the private insolent?

MACDONELL: Not enough to deserve that, sir. He appeared on dress parade after falling in the creek. The colonel reprimanded him, and he asked the colonel how he could look presentable without the time to make himself so. The colonel called him insolent and insurbordinate and—

BROCK: Ordered him flogged?

MACDONELL: Sentenced him to that at the court-martial.

BROCK *(clenches his fists)*: By God, it *is* brutality! I should have thought that Sheaffe had learned his lesson eight years ago. February, 1804. Macdonell, I can never forget that! That mutiny—the poor devils deserved their end, but they were driven to it. I have seen men blown to pieces in battle, I have been witness to terrible things on the field, but I can't

forget that! Since I have had the honour to wear the British uniform, I have never felt grief like that—to think, to know that seven members of my regiment were almost driven—yes, driven to engaging in a mutiny and a conspiracy that led to their being shot like so many dogs! And Sheaffe has learned little since then. *(Pauses)* Sedition and mutiny are deadlier than the Barbadoes fever, but tyranny is the germ of both. But tell me, how does Lieutenant Darras of the militia come into this? He is not even in the Forty-Ninth Regiment.

MACDONELL: That is just the point, sir. Darras met Colonel Sheaffe in the guardroom this evening, and told him that he was a brute and a coward, and that his rank alone saved him from personal attack by Darras himself.

BROCK *(impulsively)*: Good man! *(Realizing his position suddenly.)* That is insubordination and insult to a superior officer. He could be court-martialed for that! *(Pauses.)* Yet the boy has courage. I've seen that before with my own eyes at Detroit and Fort Malden. Courage —and spirit—the two essentials of a good soldier—and what did Colonel Sheaffe say?

MACDONELL: It was deplorable, sir. Colonel Sheaffe struck him and Darras dared him to repeat the blow. He said: "There is my other cheek, colonel—strike me again on peril of your life!"

BROCK: And did he?

MACDONELL: No. sir. He saw something in Darras' eye, and he turned away.

BROCK *(grimly)*: Discretion, the better part of valour. Or perhaps we might call it by another name—

MACDONELL: We might, sir.

BROCK *(sharply)*: Macdonell, it is not your place to speak so of your superior officer. Sheaffe is the best of soldiers—

MACDONELL: The very best, sir.

BROCK: And the worst of humanitarians. *(Silence.)*

MACDONELL: But, sir, I came to tell you what Darras said to me to-night on the cliff out there. It is treachery to Darras to tell you, but it would be worse treachery to you to leave it

untold. Darras said that the Americans might *get* Sheaffe to-morrow, and if they did not, someone else would.

BROCK *(furiously)*: The villain! I can have him shot for that! I shall, by heaven! Summon the guard and have him arrested!

MACDONELL *(backing away)*: General—

BROCK: Not a word! (*Striding to the door.*) Orderly!

MACDONELL: Sir—*(touches Brock's arm.)*

BROCK *(savagely)*: What is it? *(Private Dean appears at the door and salutes.)*

MACDONELL: General, Darras is my friend, and his blood will be on my head. *(He buries his face in his hands.)*

BROCK: Dean—*(sees Macdonell)* Dean, go away. *(turns to Macdonell as Dean goes out)* There, there, man, brace up—remember that you are an officer in His Majesty's service and don't stand there like—*(his strength fades and he places his hands on Macdonell's shoulders.)* Come, my boy *(with an effort)*, I will not have

the rascal shot—what shall I do? Such a man is dangerous in the ranks. Something must be done.

MACDONELL *(fervently)*: Let me handle him, sir. I will talk to him. I managed to get his wild ideas out of his head. He promised me that he would do nothing dishonourable—he gave me his word.

BROCK: Then go out to him, and keep him honourable. I leave him in your hands.

MACDONELL *(in an unsteady voice)*: Thank you, sir, with all my heart! Ah, general, if all officers were like you! The men worship you—they would follow you to-morrow into the mouth of an American battery.

BROCK: I have tried to be kind to them. I would never ask any of them to go where I would not lead them. I am their leader.

MACDONELL: Thank you, sir, for such kindness. I had to tell you, even if it meant my friend's life.

BROCK: Man, you're the true breed. But

Darras, will he—? I have faith in him. No son of a loyalist father could touch dishonour. And to-morrow they are coming—at Queenston—battle, Macdonell—the first great battle of our campaign—I know that Van Rensselaer will try to cross to-morrow—and by the Lord Harry! we will stop him. And who knows how many of us will return? Who knows? (*turns his back*) Good night, Macdonell.

MACDONELL: Good night, sir. *(Exit)*

(Brock stands looking after him, and then goes back to the table, takes out his letters, sits down, writes a few lines to one, seals it, taps it with his fingers for a moment and then calls.)

Orderly! *(Dean enters and salutes.)* Dean. take this letter and carry it to the post. It is to my brother Irving, and if anything should chance to-morrow, I want to feel that you will have seen to its dispatch.

DEAN: I shall have it dispatched at once. sir.

BROCK: And there are these: two for Sir George Prevost, and one for York. Send them

by the next post. *(He gives two large envelopes to Dean, and holds the other, looking at it for a moment. His fingers tighten on it for an instant, and then he gives it to the orderly.)* Dean, send Colonel Sheaffe to me at once!

(Dean salutes and goes out. Brock stands motionless for a moment, goes to the window and looks out into the pitchy blackness; the wind howls; he leaves the window and goes over to the fireplace; looking into the coals; his hands close tightly and a sigh escapes him.)

BROCK *(looking into the fireplace)*: Ashes! Ashes! Those are all that life leaves us of our hopes and dreams.

(Colonel Sheaffe enters on the right. He is a short, thick-set man of middle age. Strongly built, weatherbeaten, ruddy face, fierce dark eyes, and jutting chin, a soldier to his finger-tips. He salutes smartly as Brock turns.)

BROCK: How are you, Sheaffe? Sit down there. *(Brock sits on the cot.)* Any word of them yet?

SHEAFFE: Not yet, sir. But I think they will cross at Queenston to-night.

BROCK: In that rain. That takes courage—The river is dangerous in a gale like this. They'll not land near the point they set out from. Some of them will never land.

SHEAFFE: And we will take care of the rest, sir. (*Grimly*) *Well!*

BROCK (*slowly*): I hope so, Sheaffe. (*Smiles grimly at him*) Every little helps, for there are six thousand of them between Fort Niagara and Black Rock. We must do all that we can. We've only fifteen hundred, one quarter of their number. It is very difficult to fight six thousand men with only fifteen hundred. It is difficult, but it can be done. Do you think that they'll try a crossing here?

SHEAFFE: They may, sir.

BROCK: I don't think that is likely with our main body in the fort, but I wish that I could post them elsewhere. Fifteen hundred men aren't quite enough to place along a forty-mile

frontier, and find that it is still yours in the morning. Let me see, we have one battery at Brown's Point—that's three miles up—one gun under Heward at Vrooman's Point, and in Queenston about three hundred men.

SHEAFFE: The Grenadiers of the Forty-Ninth under Captain Dennis, a company of the Second York under Captain Chisholm, and Hall's company of the Lincoln Militia.

BROCK: And on the Heights Williams' light company of the Forty-Ninth and a redan battery. Is that correct?

SHEAFFE: Yes, sir.

BROCK: Above all, they must never reach the Heights, and I am sure that that is their aim. Evans was across two days ago for exchange of prisoners. He has a sharp eye and he saw a great fleet of boats lying ready at Lewiston.

SHEAFFE: I hope that all their crossings will meet the same fate as yesterday's. The river is running for us now. It will take care of some of them. They didn't even get within gunshot of us.

BROCK: Any upsets?

SHEAFFE: Yes, a whole damned boatload of the scoundrels, sir!

BROCK: Poor fellows! *(Sheaffe starts)* You know, Sheaffe, perhaps it woudn't be a bad idea for us to cross over and meet *them*.

SHEAFFE *(thunderstruck)*: What!

BROCK: Well, apparently they haven't good enough boatmen to get here, and we'll have to meet them somewhere. The Indians could ferry us over as if the river were a mill pond. You see we have Indians; they haven't. We beat them there. Mackinaw was a great battle for us. Now the Indians are fighting with us, instead of against us. At times they are hard to handle since Tecumseh has gone, but—

SHEAFFE: I don't trust those damned savages any more than I do the French. When we put down the Americans we'll have those two to clean out.

BROCK: You're so good a patriot, Sheaffe, that you talk arrant nonsense sometimes.

SHEAFFE *(warmly)*: How, sir? If I may be permitted to speak, the French and the Indians will sooner or later have to be taught their proper places, and soundly, too, before Canada will be safe. I wish we could ship the whole damn tribe of them over to the Americans, and then we would have all our enemies in front of us, aye, and some of these cowardly militia that know better how to handle a spade than a musket.

BROCK *(bitterly sardonic)*: Very soon, Sheaffe, only you and I will be left to defend the Empire and keep the flag flying—(*angrily*)—By the Lord Harry! that will be no false prophecy if you continue to use the madman's words that you do. You are one of the country's bravest defenders and worst enemies.

SHEAFFE *(springing to his feet)*: I! What do you mean?

BROCK: Mean, man? Mean? Have you no eyes? Have you no mind? Have you no realization that what the administrators of a colony do in time of peace makes a country, does more

for a country's strength than twenty wars? I've been a soldier all my life, but I know that! We build a country as we build a house in time of peace; then someone lights a fire when the house is nearly completed, and sometimes the whole house catches fire, the fire of war; then all our energy, all our strength and all our courage are necessary to put it out. And when it is finally over it takes years of effort to restore the ruin that was wrought by someone's carelessness or stupidity.

SHEAFFE: General, war is a glorious thing!

BROCK: Yes, the fighting of it is! The courage, the fortitude and the victory—but Sheaffe, there's the blood and pain and horror and death; these are the red fingers of war that even the gauntlets of glory and victory will never hide. In war you see the courage in men's eyes, and *(lower)* the bullets in their hearts. War is a glorious thing at times, but the causes of it never are! Soldiers and people are the pawns of statesmen and conquerors playing chess with gloves on. The men that make wars never fight them—if they can help it.

SHEAFFE: But look at Napoleon! Damn his eyes!

BROCK: No man has seen him lead a charge in a long time—not since he has become a name to terrify English children with. What is he? A man playing god, a great mind not great enough to know that he has turned Europe into a hell of bloodshed, that he has slain a hundred million men, made a million widows and orphaned ten million children to gratify the inhuman lust for power in his heart.

SHEAFFE: Damn him! But he is a great strategist.

BROCK: That may be—but Sheaffe, would you like to feel that your name made children shudder and cry in the dark as a symbol of death? Would you?

SHEAFFE: No *(retrieving his point)*, that's why I hate all French and Indians—they must be put down—they will be put down—God is on our side!

BROCK: Napoleon hopes that for himself,

too. No, Sheaffe, this world will be a better one when Englishmen are wise enough to stop feeling that Frenchmen are the spawn of the devil—and when Frenchmen think the same thing about us. We are all human beings; we are all the same thing.

SHEAFFE: I *hope* not, sir!

BROCK: I *know* it, Sheaffe.

SHEAFFE: But, sir, be reasonable. The French-Canadians will not fight for us—they will knife us in the back at their first opportunity.

BROCK: Not if they are fairly and justly treated. In a way I fear them, not particularly in the present contingency, for they have no more love for the Americans than they have for the English, yet on the other hand it would be quite natural for them to support the land from which they spring, especially if they are treated with injustice and harshness. They are, after all, French in blood and bone, and my old friend, Sir James Craig, should have foreseen and understood their discontent, instead of an-

tagonizing them with sternness. Their sympathy with Napoleon is very natural and very real, and therefore very dangerous to the well-being of Canada.

SHEAFFE: I understand that only too well, sir. They must be watched, and at the first sign of treachery beaten to the dust. I don't feel that they are Canadians at all, sir.

BROCK: No, you wouldn't, Sheaffe, and you won't give them a chance to prove that they are. But, nevertheless, I tell you this: they are the first Canadians, but Wolfe made them Englishmen, something they had no desire to be.

SHEAFFE: That's the very trouble, sir.

BROCK: Tell me this: do you blame the United Empire Loyalists for leaving the United States after the Revolution?

SHEAFFE: No, sir, not at all.

BROCK: And why did they leave?

SHEAFFE: Because of the inhumanly-brutal treatment they received! Because they were Loyalists!

BROCK: Exactly, there's your point! The French are inclined to be loyalists toward their own country, and will leave or rebel if we treat them as the Americans did the Loyalists. Do you see?

SHEAFFE: Yes, sir—that is, no—but they *shouldn't* rebel!

BROCK: And they won't, if treated properly. Some of them will even fight for us, and we must just leave the others to work their farms; we must protect them and give them good government, and in less than fifty years they will be as good Canadians as the Loyalists themselves.

SHEAFFE: That is very possible, sir, as you explain it, but Canada is under such handicaps: it is full of natural disadvantages, like the French and the savages.

BROCK: Do you think that the Indians are savages, Sheaffe?

SHEAFFE: Don't you, sir?

BROCK: By no means. They are a people that compel my unbounded admiration. Brave

to a degree of madness, loyal in the extreme and a race of men that never forget a friend nor forgive a foe. Treated well and kindly, and as the noble children that they are, they will be one of Canada's greatest assets. Compare them with the other races we govern, and they tower like mountains. There is a great deal of the ancient Roman spirit about them.

SHEAFFE: But their cruelty, sir. Even that fellow Hull called them in his stupid proclamation: "a force which respects no rights and knows no wrongs."

BROCK: That statement is on a par with Hull's other remarks. The Americans had made them a force which respected no rights and knew no wrongs, and they forgot that the Indians were men, and had equal rights with all other men to defend their endangered lives and their invaded lands. The Shawnees were no more cruel and ferocious toward the Kentucky riflemen of Harrison than *they* were to the Indians. Harrison used the same warfare of brutality against the western Indians that Hull claimed he deplored in his Detroit Proclamation.

SHEAFFE: That proclamation was a good joke, wasn't it, sir?

BROCK: Well, we managed to make it that. But you are off the point, Sheaffe. You must remember this: Canada is not a country made up entirely of Englishmen and of the descendants of Englishmen. There are the French and the Indians. Sir James Craig has treated the French with only a little more consideration than General Harrison accorded the Indians. We were fortunate enough to gain far more from Harrison's mistake than we lost by Sir James! Remember, Sheaffe, no people whose native rights to the land are as strong and justifiable as the rights of the French-Canadians and the Indians, no peoples like these are to be subdued with tyranny and harshness. Rather they should be won with kindliness and consideration.

SHEAFFE: I see.

BROCK: You must get close to the great men of a race to appreciate it in all its fineness. If you had ever known the great Tecumseh as I do, you would respect and admire his people.

He was of more assistance to the British arms at the taking of Detroit than fifty batteries of cannon would have been. I was proud to cali him my friend. A wiser and more gallant warrior and man does not exist. He won the admiration of all who knew him.

SHEAFFE: He never approached *me,* sir.

BROCK *(rising and walking toward Sheaffe)*: Colonel, you may wonder why I have told you all this and tried to make you see things as I have learned to see them. To-morrow we meet the Americans, and who knows how many of us will survive? You may, I may—but it will be a desperate encounter, a greater battle than any in which we have been engaged. If anything should happen to me, I want to feel that you who will succeed to my command will understand the peoples of Canada as I do. I tell you again, Sheaffe, that if you treat the French and the Indians properly they will become as good Canadians as the English themselves. Do you believe that?

SHEAFFE *(unwillingly)*: Perhaps–you may be right, sir.

BROCK: I *am* right, Sheaffe; I know men. Besides, Colonel, *(smiling)*, is it good discipline to tell a superior officer that " he *may* be right?"

SHEAFFE *(arising quickly and saluting)*: I am sorry, sir; I acknowledge my mistake and apologize for it. An officer has no more right to question his superior than a fellow of the ranks to answer his officer.

BROCK: I am only fooling, man. You may be perfectly wrong to doubt my word; but you are not compelled to agree with me.

SHEAFFE: I beg your pardon, sir, I am.

BROCK *(quickly)*: But at this very moment you are contradicting yourself. *(Laughs.)*

SHEAFFE *(nonplussed)*: I—I am sorry, sir. General, this is not a trivial matter, and you are inclined to make light of it, but discipline is discipline, and above all it must be maintained.

BROCK: Why, even now you are criticising me!

SHEAFFE *(becoming agitated)*: I am not, sir! But, General, this is serious—I would cen-

sure and punish any subordinate who talked to me as I have talked to you. I would not allow it.

BROCK: Very well, Colonel Sheaffe. Consider yourself under arrest. *(Sheaffe salutes, unbuckles his sword slowly and lays it on the table.)* Now say these words after me, "I am a narrow, intolerant, unreasonable man—"

SHEAFFE: But—

BROCK: Say them.

SHEAFFE: "I am a narrow, intolerant, unreasonable man."

BROCK: "I believe that one Englishman is worth ten Frenchmen and fifty savages—"

SHEAFFE *(happily)*: "I believe that one Englishman is worth ten Frenchmen and fifty savages—"

BROCK: "Which is open to question."

SHEAFFE *(gritting his teeth)*: "Which is open to question."

BROCK: "In the future I will attempt to be more humane—"

SHEAFFE: "In the future I will attempt to be more humane—"

BROCK: "And merciful—and just to those men under my command—"

SHEAFFE *(with an effort)*: "And merciful and just to those men under my command—"

BROCK: "Than I have been in the past."

SHEAFFE *(in a fury)*: "Than I have been in the past."

BROCK: Now consider yourself free from arrest.

SHEAFFE *(buckling on his sword, bitterly)*: It is well, general, that you are my superior—a superior officer can make his subordinate suffer any indignity without retaliation.

BROCK: *Not* without retaliation. Tell me, Sheaffe *(walking closer to him)*, tell me like a man—who has suffered the most—you in being forced to repeat my opinion of your narrowness

and brutality, or that private whom you had flogged the other morning? Tell me that.

SHEAFFE: I have. The fellow was insolent —and only a private—I am an officer and a gentleman!

BROCK *(evenly)*: You are an officer, Colonel Sheaffe! *(Sheaffe swears beneath his breath)* Not a good officer—have I forgotten that terrible piteous business in 1804 where you drove seven poor devils to be shot in Quebec for rebelling against your inhumanity? And you have learned nothing since then? A gentleman—would a gentleman have struck Lieutenant Darras for protesting against your injustice?

SHEAFFE *(angrily)*: I ought to have shot him!

BROCK: I imagine that he would be perfectly willing to accept your challenge any time —and he is one of the best shots in the militia. I advise you not to offer it. *(Sheaffe is silent.)* Good God, man, to be talking this way with six thousand Americans ready to cross from Lewiston to-night! Where are your

wits? Where are your senses? But I tell you, to close the matter: that if I have one more instance of your injustice you shall be reduced. Men are not to be cowed like animals; they are to be won with kindness, humanity and understanding. Will you be kind enough now to send Macdonell, Fitzgibbon and Evans to me and to return yourself? *(Sheaffe goes out. Brock stands looking after him shaking his head. He walks over to the fireplace and stands with his back to it as Macdonell, Major Fitzgibbon and Major Evans enter, followed by Sheaffe Fitzgibbon is a bluff, hearty Irishman, and Evans, a keen, quiet English officer. They salute.)*

BROCK *(nods pleasantly to them)*: Gentlemen *(Sheaffe winces.)*, I have called you here to make final arrangements for to-morrow. Major Fitzgibbon, are all your men in readiness?

FITZGIBBON: They are *that*, sir!

BROCK: And where are the Indians?

FITZGIBBON: Them devils are encamped a

few miles up the river, sir. All togged up in their war-paint, and sharpenin' their tomahawks. They had some kind of a dance this afternoon and they are all burnin' to get at the Long Knives, as they call them. One of the old chiefs told me that they had a sign that we would just knock the spots off the Americans to-morrow. Sure, I'll be sorry for any of them within reach of those lads, sir.

BROCK: There must be no massacre or needless slaughter, Fitzgibbon. I look to you to keep them in hand if any American troops are surrounded. Major Evans, you have just returned from Queenston, have you not?

EVANS: Yes, sir.

BROCK: All well there?

EVANS: Yes, sir. A company of Dennis' Grenadiers, Chisholm's Second Yorks, and the Militia under Hall. All in the village, sir. ready.

BROCK: And on the Heights?

EVANS: Williams' light company and a redan battery on the top, sir.

BROCK: That's very little. Was there any immediate sign of them crossing the river?

EVANS: Not since they failed yesterday, sir. But they are gathering at Lewiston under Colonel Van Rensselaer. They will come early to-morrow, I think.

BROCK: I expect so, Evans. You will ride back to Queenston, and return directly with all speed to let me have news. We will march in the morning. Colonel Sheaffe, you will have the regiment under marching orders for six o'clock in the morning. Major Fitzgibbon, you will proceed at once to the encampment and tell our Indians to be ready to leave on short notice for Queenston.

FITZGIBBON: Directly, sir. *(He salutes.)*

BROCK: Good-bye, Fitzgibbon, and remember what I told you about keeping the Indians in check. To-morrow we may see the greatest battle of the war. Bear yourself like men, and remember that they must not hold *one foot* of

Canadian ground. Not one foot. Good night, Fitzgibbon. *(Shakes hands with him.)* Good night, Evans, and good luck on your ride. *(Shakes hands.)* Good night, Sheaffe. *(Holds out his hand to Sheaffe who ignores it, salutes stiffly and goes out. Brock looks after him, takes one furious step to the door, then stops, unclenches his hands, and shakes his head sadly.)* Too bad, too bad, but you can't make a blind man see. *(Raising his voice.)* Can you, Macdonell?

MACDONELL: Can I what, sir?

BROCK: Tell a man the truth and be his friend.

MACDONELL: Very rarely, sir. I made you Darras' friend just now with a slight untruth. I told him that you—had spoken sharply to Colonel Sheaffe.

BROCK: How did you know that?

MACDONELL: I—I invented it, sir.

BROCK *(smiling)*: Well, only a Scotchman can invent the truth.

Macdonell. Tell me, how is Lieutenant Darras?

MACDONELL: I've gotten all the wild thoughts out of him, sir. He has quieted down, and gone off to bed.

BROCK: Good. Good. I'm glad of that. Macdonell, you've done me a service in that. Darras is a fine boy and I shouldn't like to have lost him. I'll need men like him to-morrow. And now, Macdonell, get a little sleep; I'm afraid we'll have to be on the march very early. Good night. *(Shakes hands.)*

MACDONELL: Good night, sir. *(He goes out.)*

(Brock goes after him, closes the door, unbuttons his coat as he goes to the window. He takes off his coat, and reveals his highnecked white shirt, lays the coat on the table, stretches his arms, and goes toward the mantel where he blows out all but one candle. He returns to the cot, and kneels beside it . . . He arises and looks at the map.)

BROCK *(solemnly and quietly)*: Canada—

Canada—God grant that I may keep you great and free as you are—and make you even greater than your King ever dreams of your being. *(Slowly.)* You are my destiny and my kingdom. Ask of me what you will, all if need be, and I shall give it. *(He lifts the cover from the cot, and sits on the edge of it. The door opens softly and Lieutenant Darras comes in silently. He is in the uniform of a lieutenant of the Militia. Brock does not hear him. He comes forward. He is a slim, rather pale young man of little more than twenty. Fine slim fingers, sensitive features, and intense dark eyes. He speaks in a low voice:*

DARRAS: General.

BROCK *(turns and rises quickly)*: Who is it?

DARRAS: Lieutenant Darras, general.

BROCK: What do you want at this hour, Darras?

DARRAS: I have come to tell you something, general. Something that I *had* to tell you.

BROCK: What is it?

DARRAS: General, I am going to desert.

BROCK: What!

DARRAS: I am going to desert.

BROCK: Desert? What do you mean, man? What are you saying?

DARRAS: I came to tell you—I couldn't sneak off in the dark—without a word—I had to tell you—you make men do such things—but I'm tired of it all—I can't go on—I wasn't made for it. And besides they need me at home.

BROCK: Afraid?

DARRAS: Do you—think so? No, it isn't that—but I can't stand it. I'm supposed to be fighting for justice and freedom–and they aren't here. I don't hate the Americans enough, either, to be a good soldier. And I want to go back; they need me on the farm and I need them. My father is ill, and my mother can't handle the farm now. I stayed on last month when you let the others go, because I couldn't leave then. I felt that you needed me. My brother was kill-

ed at Maguago—there's another one in service on the lakes and I am the only one left. Besides, I'm weary of the thought of fighting and killing men no worse than we are ourselves. I can't do it.

BROCK: Why? These men want to take your country, Canada.

DARRAS: I know—there's magic in the name, isn't there? But they won't touch our farm. They'll let us go on keeping it. And, general, I'm not a soldier. I don't like it. It's not a question of courage. But I can't stick it out—the harshness, the weariness, and the loneliness of it for months, and the brutality.

BROCK: I've stuck it out for twenty years

DARRAS: Oh, I know. But you're strong. You're a great soldier, you were born to be one and you are. You can lead men into hell, and they'll follow you with a smile because they worship you. You're kind and noble and big. I'm not. I was born for a quiet life, and I only joined because I felt inside that I had to.

BROCK: And you must go on, Darras. You

joined until His Majesty sets you free, honourably.

DARRAS: His Majesty doesn't care about me—nor I for him, but my family care for me. *His* men are men like Colonel Sheaffe—soldiers, hard men who were born for the sword and its work. Men without heart and kindness.

BROCK: Men that have to be—men that have to do the rough work of Empire and keep it, Darras. Men like me.

DARRAS: Not like you, general. Do you think that I haven't seen in your eyes the weariness of it all, the pain, the loneliness, and the lack of love?

BROCK: (*tense*): No—but yes—you've seen it then. But that's no matter. I have to go on. I shall. There may be rest somewhere—far ahead.

DARRAS: Where?

BROCK: Far on. But perhaps—not so far. But I must go on. I made my oath as the Brocks have for generations—and found rest one after

another in the arms of Empire. A long way from Guernsey. In France, in India, at the Nile, in the seas and in the Americas. That is my heritage, Darras. I was born in a warlike year, that year of 1769 when Wellington and Napoleon were born. It has been the work of the Brocks to toil far afield, and to fight. Our name means "the sword."

DARRAS: Those that live by the sword shall—

BROCK: And how perish better? Battle was my birthright—the gray coast and the old channel that it withstands, and the thunder of the ocean. France to the east, England above and Spain below. Centuries of battle. Guernsey was a very place and home of war. The barrack and the camp have been my hearth, the world my home, and war my only constant companion.

DARRAS: I know. But I'm different. I am a man of the land. I was born to cultivate the things that you were born to protect and save. You must do your work and I must go back to mine.

BROCK: My boy, you must not! Your place is here, where your word was given. I need you —more than your own people do.

DARRAS: General, have you ever thought of women growing old over their land as mine are growing now? Have you ever seen them toil as their men should, and grow bent when the men are gone? To rise before the sun, and to be wearied all through the day, glad for the night that means rest without joy. Have you seen their hands grow hard and tired as their eyes darken, until the love of their land in the possession of it is turned to an aching slavery over its care? Have you seen that? My mother and sisters have no one now—and winter is coming on. Unless the land is made to give up its yearly fruit, the winter months are long and vacant. And when the men turn soldiers, there are no sons to love and keep and tend their heritage. The houses are empty and the fences fall. Do you understand, General?

BROCK: Aye. *(He turns away.)*

DARRAS: That is why I must go.

BROCK: Yes — you must — (*he wheels around*). No, my boy, you must *not* — there is a greater land than one farm, and more families than one. There is a continent and a million lands — ten thousand homes for you to care, and the land of the generations to come — so that when men plow in the morning a hundred years from now, you will have kept their furrows in the Empire, and they will remember you not by your name, but by your sacrifice. By your love in giving one small hearth in the greater love for thousands. That is what makes the land, my boy.

DARRAS: Yes, I know. It should be, but it isn't somehow to me. No other fields and no other trees nor any other little river in all the Empire or all the world are as dear to me as my own. I know them. I have learned to *feel* them. They were the first things that I saw—and I want them to be the last. They must be. I have dreamt of my sons on them.

BROCK: That is your highest gift: Your sons that are not, but might have been, for so you give your immortality—for that of others.

DARRAS (*bitterly*): And thus — *you* talk. you, the warrior and slayer of men's sons!

BROCK: Have I not slain my own — and kept them unborn — denied me a man's greatest glory for these twenty years? And trod out my dreams like sparks?

DARRAS *(slowly)*: That is so.

BROCK: We who have never had that joy know and feel it as its possessors never do.

DARRAS: I would know.

BROCK: And I would. But I cannot—*(passionately)* I never can! I never shall! I will give you your papers and you can go—for my sake—in my place. *(He sits down at the table.)*

DARRAS *(unwisely)*: To realize your dream. *(Brock buries his head in his hands. Darras comes up to him and touches him.)* Forgive me, I did not mean to—

BROCK *(dully)*: I know, but it was sharp, like a sword—*(he touches his heart)* it was a sword here. *(He writes.)* Here are your papers. *(Darras takes them.)*

DARRAS: Thank you, sir. It is so much. It means everything—it brings a glory back to life—

BROCK: A dull violent life of storm and wind and watch-fires. A kinship with the thunder and the night. War—and for what? For what? I wonder, I wonder—

DARRAS *(awakening)*: I wonder, too—is there something vast behind it all that I haven't ever guessed or dreamed of?

BROCK: There *is*—there *is* Something. It is Empire.

DARRAS: What is this Empire that men speak of?

BROCK: Something.

DARRAS: What has it done for you or for me? If we spill our lives on the ground to-morrow, will there be less joy in royal hearts when we are dead?

BROCK: That is not it—I feel that I know it *now*—Empire is not built upon a man within a palace—or on a descendant of many kings, how-

ever glorious. The Empire is built of thought, and each precious thought in the heart of every Englishman is a block in the wall of Empire. What *is* England? What is this thing that I fight for? I know now: *(He speaks very slowly.)*

My home, the gray stones of Guernsey set forever in the sea, the place where I was born, those who made up the circle of my hearth, those whom I knew thereafter, those who made my tongue the greatest in the world, Shakespeare and Milton, those who wrote in my tongue as men never did since the world began, those great gray churches of my land, the white cliffs, the very mist and rain, the sunlight in April on English meadows, the flowers, the morning, the laughter and tears of my race, the great hearts that beat and the broad hands that strove: Nelson, Marlborough, Wellington, Wolfe, Cromwell, Drake, Raleigh, Sidney, Henry the Fifth, Edward and his son the Black Prince, Saxon Harold and Alfred, and a million men whose names no man will ever know, these men who fired a hearth that never shall be put out, who

kept with their lives the sacred flame of England burning, free from profanation by foreign and hostile hands. These are my heritage; these are my empire. The flag never streams in the east wind without speaking to me of them. For them I shall give my life, if need be, in these forests of Canada or on the sands of Egypt—and in giving it I know that I light but a very small candle upon an altar whose greatness I can never fully realize nor describe.

DARRAS *(putting the paper on the table, and holding out his hands)*: Forgive me. I am yours—now and forever!

BROCK *(taking his hands)*: Not mine—but England's.

(A rumble of coach wheels is heard outside the window. They turn. Dean comes in with a lantern.)

DEAN: Your pardon, sir. But there is a coach outside; a lady has driven here — from York she says — to see you.

BROCK (*trembling*): From York? (*He runs*

to the window and peers out.) It *is!* It *is* she! On *this* night! *(He starts toward the door.)*

DEAN: It looks as though the coach has travelled all day and night, sir.

(Darras trembles and picks up the papers again. Brock turns and sees him looking at the papers eagerly. With a mighty effort Brock braces himself and speaks in a voice of iron)

BROCK: Tell the lady that she must seek shelter at Colonel Pritchard's—tell her that I—that I have gone to Queenston.

DEAN: But, sir—

BROCK: That I have gone to Queenston. *(Dean salutes and goes out.)*

(With quivering hands Darras tears the papers across, faces Brock and salutes him.)

— Curtain. —

THE PATRIOT
1837

THE PATRIOT

THE CAST

JOHN WATERS ..... *a farmer*
ANNIE ..... *his wife*
MICHAEL ..... *their son*
MARY ..... *their daughter*
THE STRANGER.

THE PATRIOT

Nine o'clock on the night of Saturday, December the ninth, in the year of rebellion, 1837. The main room of a small farmhouse, midway between Hamilton and Stony Creek; to find it a patriot came "through a concession parallel to the Mountain Road above Hamilton, found his way through the Binbrook and Glanford Woods, forded the Twenty-Mile Creek, and rode on for ten miles" which proves that the farmhouse is on no public road nor easy to find. To be candid, only a lost man or a lost patriot would have stumbled upon such an out-of-the-way place.

The room is low-ceilinged, staunch-looking and not overly bright. Entry to this farmhouse living-room of John Waters, Hibernian and Orangeman, is by means of a stout and sturdy front door, stout and sturdy as John Waters himself. On either side of the door

are two fairly large, small-paned windows which are uncurtained. On their sills the snow is piled high, and outside the December wind howls like a wolf. A door at the back corner of the right-hand wall leads to the kitchen. Two other doors on the left wall lead to bedrooms. An immense fireplace, built of rough-hewn stone, is on the right and in its dim, friendly, red glow the Waters family is clustered. In a huge rocker sits John, massive, muscular, strong of arm and feature. He is little over forty and has a great shock of curly, black hair. On his knee sleeps seven-year-old Mary, in a grey flannel nightgown. Annie, John's wife, is little over thirty, a dark, kindly-eyed colleen, grown a trifle matronly with the bearing of five children. She is spinning industriously and talking as she does. Michael, a lad of eleven with great, dark eyes, sits silent, head on his hands, elbows on his knees, staring into the coals. At intervals the wind blows a gust of sparks down and whines in the chimney.

JOHN: (*taking his great black pipe from*

his mouth) Sure, 'tis a good night to be indoors and not out tramplin' in the snow.

ANNIE: It is that, John. You know, in the winter I often get thinkin' that all the cruel spirits in the world are out walkin' the roads in December here. 'Tis not like Ireland in the summer here neither.

JOHN: There's no country like Ireland in the summer, Annie, exceptin' maybe heaven, but here in Canada, a man's land's his own so long as he pays his taxes and votes proper. Sure, you wouldn't find a snugger, warmer bit o' land in all Canada than ours, even though 'tis a bit out o' the way.

ANNIE: You know, I often do be lonesome for a good neighbour until I start workin' so hard I forget. Work's a great thing to make you forget who you are entirely.

JOHN: True, we don't get much time to be rememberin' who we are and thinkin' of our troubles with the toilin' we've had this year past, but we're comin' on slowly. It'll be a rare farm in a year or two, Annie.

ANNIE: Sure, John, we could have worked our whole lives away in Ireland and never been half as well off as we are this day.

JOHN: Oh aye. We've been very fortunate and cannot be complainin' at all. We're as happy as most in Upper Canada; aye, there's many not so happy at all.

ANNIE: What means all this talk that we've been hearin' of rebellion in York that they call Toronto? Is there truth in it?

JOHN: It's a very, very bad business, rebellion is. It gets you nowhere. 'Tis true there's a great deal more power in the hands of a few in Upper Canada than ever should be, but rebellion's no way to right it. From the last word I had of it all, a group o' wild bosthoons were talking of a march on old York and takin' over the whole government.

ANNIE: God save us, an' it's just like Ireland ever since the English put foot in it. Will it be a civil war, John?

JOHN: If those reckless divils once get an idea they'll carry it through, if they can come

round the soldiers. I heard they were gatherin' Thursday above York, under that man Mackenzie and Lount and Rolph and the rest.

ANNIE: And what all will they do?

JOHN: There's no tellin' that. From all the talk, they might do a good deal. The crows take them for a parcel of wild, lawless rascals! There's no good in rebellion. But then, there's them who say all's not well in the government—and they may be right. There's no reason why six or seven men should run a country, or act like Englishmen in Ireland.

ANNIE: The main thing is this, John—will all this touch the holdin' of our farm? When governments change, 'tis always the poor folk suffer, not havin' time to realize their mistakes in actin' for the old government. Will the farm be safe?

JOHN: Safe as safe can be. The deed protects us from the governin' side and the farm is so out o' the regular way no rebels'll ever come burnin' it.

ANNIE: Oh, God save us if they do!

JOHN: Hush, woman! 'Tis all nonsense we're jabberin'. Whatever rebellin' there'll be will be all away over in York. Divil take that new Indian name if I can say it!

ANNIE: I wish you'd go over and get some real news of it all in the mornin'. No one ever comes by this road to tell us at all.

JOHN: Maybe I will, if you'll hold your whisht. *(He leans forward to poke the fire and sees Michael gazing, rapt, into it.)* Micky, ye young spalpeen, why do ye sit there, hour after hour, gazin' into the fire as if ye saw something there?

MICKY: Oh aye, father, but I do; it's wonderful to look into the fire and see all the grand things that you think of and can't say.

JOHN: An' what do ye see, Mick? Would it be a banshee or a divil's-light or one such?

MICKY: No, it's none of those, da. It's dreams and the like and fancies, and all the things you want to be, that move in the flames o' the fire.

ANNIE: Sure, Mick, an' what do ye see?

MICKY: Oh, I see everythin' grand. I see you with a carriage and Mary a fine young lady with long curls and da in a great silk hat, makin' laws and such, and I see meself all grown up to be a great soldier ——

ANNIE: Soldier is it, ye rascal? Don't speak o' soldierin' to me! 'Tis a farmer ye'll be, like your da there and keep the farm together. Ye'll do no soldierin' and rebellin' and the like, No son o' me'll join in such wild doin's. Rebels and such!

MICKY: I saw soldiers once. My, but they're fine! I'd like to see a rebel next, a real rebel like Uncle Charlie told me—like Papineau.

ANNIE: The Lord preserve us from all such! Mick, if you don't run off to bed I'll thump your ears for you. *(Mick sits.)*

ANNIE: Mick!

JOHN: Ah woman, let the young scrimpin' be! I used to see things like that in the fire when I was his age too—but I kept quiet about them. (*to Mick*) and so *do* you!

ANNIE: Rebels and the like!

(Silence. John smokes; Annie examines her wheel; Micky stares on into the glow. Another gust of sparks flies down as the wind whistles. Little Mary wakes on her father's knee with a start.)

MARY: Da! *(She clutches her father.)* Da! I hear somethin'.

JOHN: Whisht, child, 'tis only the wind ye hear. Go to sleep and I'll put ye to bed presently.

MARY (*listening intently*): Da! It is somethin' — It is somethin' — Someone's comin' — someone's comin' near us — fast.

(They start a little, listening uneasily in spite of themselves.)

JOHN: I hear nothin', child—ye been dreamin'.

MARY *(Her voice rises.)*: Da! Someone's comin'—ridin', ridin' like the wind. Listen!

(Thoroughly alarmed, John puts her down and springs to the alert.)

JOHN: I—it *is* someone.

(Annie gathers little Mary in her arms and goes to enfold Mick. He runs to his father's side and helps him bar the door. John picks up an axe standing near the door, and Mick a billet of wood. A low thudding sound rises above the wind, the sound of hoofbeats on the hard snow, becoming louder and louder.)

ANNIE: God save us! who can it be, this time o' night? Don't open the door, John!

(The hoofs thud near and nearer; the shape of a great, black horse and rider flash past the right-hand window. The snow whirls behind them. A cry is heard as the rider stops his mount and gets off. A knock sounds, peremptory yet not loud.)

JOHN: Who's there? *(A sharp voice comes.)*

THE VOICE: A traveller—I have lost my road—I am alone.

(John opens the door a little and, seeing the man's size, admits him.)

Look carefully at this man, this fugitive who steps across the door-sill of John Waters' lonely farmhouse, on that bitter night of December the ninth, 1837, for he has written his name largely across the history of Canada. Here he enters, the little patriot who dared to lose all, even his good name, for his country's good. He is forty-two and his face is deeply lined with harsh years that outnumber these. He is a trifle under middle height, slim and wiry. Even the last three days of hard riding and terrific physical strain have not humbled a spirit that nothing in life could daunt; there is still something of the old, quick, nervous energy, of the spring in his step. His head darts quick glances into the interior. His clothing is tatterdemalion and nondescript, a 'bonnet rouge', a trifle large for him ("wearing the cap of J. Latimer, one of my young men, my hat having been knocked off in a skirmish") a torn, homespun, sorry slippers for his limbs are so swollen that he has had to discard his boots. His beard

is unshaven. Seeing Annie, his inborn courtesy asserts itself. He bows.)

THE STRANGER: Madam–your ser–rvant.

(His head is massive, high and broad in the frontal region and well rounded. His fine blue eyes are piercing, restless and keen, his chin long and broad, a firm-set mouth with firmly pressed lips which, undulating in a mass, move all that part of his face below the nostrils, keeping time with the motion and twinkle of the clear, eager eyes. Two qualities predominate in that face—courage and unrest.)

THE STRANGER: I am off my way, sir, and ask shelter of you if you will afford me that. I am travelling from Hamilton to Niagara. *(He catches sight of the beam of a balance marked "Charles Waters, Maker" hung in a conspicuous place.)* Mr. Charles Waters, sir——

JOHN: I'm John Waters, farmer. Charles is my brother in Montreal. *(John is hostile. Annie not at all, Micky examines the newcomer from head to foot. Little Mary is slightly frightened.)*

THE STRANGER *(to Micky)*: Well, my lad. *(He offers his hand, which Micky takes, bowing with a "sir." The stranger produces a purse that clinks merrily.)* Mr. Waters, I would ask you, if you will be so kind as to accommodate me for the nicht, *(His Scotch accent creeps in)* and see to stabling my horse — my indebtedness would be perhaps two dollars? (*He offers them.*)

ANNIE: Indeed, an' 'tis far too much for our humble style o' livin' and shelter——

THE STRANGER: Madam, in my time I have known far humbler and been well content.

(This melts Annie completely, for its sincerity is straight as his lips, comes from his heart, a heart whose nobility is seen by the Waters', even after these few minutes.)

ANNIE: Sit you down, sir, and draw up beside the fire, for 'tis a rare cold night outside.

THE STRANGER *(Taking off his worn, woollen gloves)*: It feels coldest, Mr. Waters, when one is riding—riding fast.

MARY (*piping up*): There, 'n I told you, da, the genl'm'n was ridin' fast.

JOHN: Whisht, child.

ANNIE: Sure, sir, 'n she did. Before Mr. Waters or meself ever heard the horse, she waked up from her sleep, sayin' she heard you in the wind. *Seein'*, she is, and a queer one—sensitive.

JOHN: Hold such talk, Annie, 'tis foolish.

THE STRANGER *(Going to Mary, smiling and putting his hand on her head)*:
"Thou, over whom Thy Immortality,
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by . . . ."
Ah, Mr. Waters, when we are children, many wonderful things are clearer to us.

ANNIE: Sure, sir, and you talk better than the preacher does. Now, take off your coat, sir, and you'll be after havin' a bit o' supper an' a good cup o' tea.

THE STRANGER: It is long after supper, Mrs. Waters, I'll not trouble you.

ANNIE: Whisht, sir, 'tis no trouble at all.

JOHN: I'll see to your horse and feed him.

MICKY: May I come and help you, da?

JOHN: You can see the beast through the window, Mick. *(He goes out, muffled up, and Micky runs to the window.)*

(And now the fallen patriot sits in a great chair before the fire, warming the ardent frame that has felt the evil chills of tyranny and injustice sink deeper than the December frost. The red glow outlines that eager, furrowed and sensitive face. The mouth twitches. His hands open and close nervously.)

THE STRANGER (*sighs to himself*): Well, what must be, must be. It is God's will.

(Mary goes up to him timidly.)

MARY: Would you like to see my doll?

THE STRANGER (*starting a little*): Aye, lassie, I would. What's her name?

MARY: Her name is Charles.

THE STRANGER (*smiles*): Oh, I see.

MARY: After my favourite uncle.

THE STRANGER: Well, well. Would you like to sit on my knee?

MARY: I would, but you look so frightened.

THE STRANGER: I—no—well. *(He lifts her up.)* There, now I'm not frightened any more.

MARY: You look so tired, mister.

THE STRANGER: I am, lassie.

MARY: Well then, we'll both go to sleep while ma gets supper. Would you like to?

THE STRANGER (*an odd break in his voice*): Aye, lassie, I would. *(She snuggles up to him. He pretends to sleep and two great tears run down his cheeks. Micky goes over to him.)*

MICKY: Oh mister, that's a grand, big, black horse you have!

(The Stranger motions him to be quiet, for Mary has fallen asleep.)

My, I'd love to ride him.

THE STRANGER: Well then, lad, before I leave in the morning maybe you'll have a wee ride, if you like.

MICKY (*glad to be justified*): Ma, the genl'm'n looks into the fire too, just like I do.

ANNIE: Ah, such nonsense, boy, indeed! Mick here says he's always after seein' all manner o' grand things in the fire if he looks long enough. *(She laughs.)*

MICKY (*not very confident*): Can't you see gran' dreams and pictures an' all in the fire too, mister?

THE STRANGER (*gently*): Aye, lad—once —I could once.

(John returns, rubbing his hands.)

JOHN: That's a splendid horse you have there. Not many finer than him in Upper Canada, I'll be bound.

THE STRANGER: Aye, he is, a very noble beast; too good indeed for a born walker like me.

JOHN: Only a good horseman could ride him, mister. You underrate yourself.

MICKY: Da, the genl'm'n says I may ride him in the morning.

JOHN: Can you now, Micky? You know you couldn't ride a cow.

ANNIE: Now sir, will you come and sit in? The supper's all pipin' hot.

THE STRANGER: Madam, your hospitality is more than a chance wayfarer deserves. *(He sits down.)*

JOHN: Now Mick, it's high time you an' Mary were in your beds. Off with you! Give Mother and me a kiss and to bed with you.

(Micky and Mary kiss their father and mother, and Mary turns to the Stranger.)

MARY: Good-night, mister. *(She waits to to be kissed and the Stranger after a moment's hesitation, complies.)*

THE STRANGER: Good-night, my wee lass, may ye never grow to find your dreams less happy than they are now.

(Micky holds out his hand.)

MICKY: An' may I ride your horse in the mornin', sir?

THE STRANGER: Aye, ye may, my boy, and good-night.

(The children go out, shepherded by Annie.)

This is a rare supper, Mr. Waters, for one who is little favoured by luck.

JOHN: Thank you. *(He is a little curt.)*

ANNIE (*coming back to her spinning-wheel*): Now, mister, if there's anything at all wantin', just call for it. *(She watches him eagerly as he devours the excellent meal before him.)* Have you travelled far this night?

THE STRANGER: I have. Many a weary mile.

JOHN: And why? *(John is more curious than friendly.)*

THE STRANGER: Mr. Waters, I must be at Niagara by the morning.

ANNIE: There's great talk of rebellion in Upper Canada these days, especially those lawless men at York, under Mackenzie. Have you been in York?

THE STRANGER (*turning*): I have — and there's no more rebellion. All the trouble and strife there's been for reform and better government have come to nothing.

ANNIE: And why is that?

THE STRANGER (*almost furiously*): Because a great number of the men who pledged themselves to fight to the last drop of blood in their bodies ran at the first rattle of musket-fire.

ANNIE: And a good thing too, those lawless bodies left well enough alone.

THE STRANGER: They did not leave well enough alone, madam. They had courage but no bullets with which to fight injustice and tyranny—tyranny as I see it, tyranny and oppression and the long perversion of justice which have lain like a yoke on the neck of Canadian Freedom. Freedom of speech and good government are a man's birthright. There is none

of either in Upper Canada—and none in Lower. Only a snobbish, aristocratic, small set of rascals in office who even have the power to parcel out the very soil of Canada we tread on, to their friends and relatives.

JOHN: I hold with you there, my friend, but why do you get so upset and wild about it? What is it to you who governs? Askin' your pardon, I feel sure, from your appearance, that you're no man of property whatever.

THE STRANGER (*looks at his ragged clothes*): True, I *am* no man of property—now. I have lost everything, but Canada has lost more than that. She has lost her integrity and character.

JOHN: For a man who has nothing to lose by it, it seems to hit you rarely.

THE STRANGER (*vehemently*): It does hit me "rarely", as you say, Mr. Waters. It hits me as it should hit every Canadian who wants to see his country lawfully and fairly governed and not by the stupid, cruel, unjust clique of office-holders in power at present. That be!-

lowing bull of a Strachan, and that polished young snob, Robinson, and the rest. Head is a helpless, stupid monkey who dances to their music because he has neither brains nor courage enough to make his own. And the rest—the rare men the Crown sends out—Sir John Colborne and Sir George Arthur, governors of penal settlements, sent as governors of Canada, a country of free men, sent here to cow and brutify a free people.

(In place of the weary traveller and fugitive there appears now, in the Stranger, the quality and force of "The unpurchasable patriot," the commanding eloquent, vivid, and picturesque leader of the people. He forgets all caution and reveals himself in the character of the gallant, stormy petrel of Upper Canada, the hot-headed idolater of justice with a genius for political agitation. John and Annie Waters behold, unknown to them, the arch-rebel, the reformer ahead of his time, hearty in his love of public right, passionate in his hatred of public wrong-doers, clever, brave and energetic, the tribune of the Canadian people and fugitive from "justice". His hands open and close restlessly, his features

twitch and move, his voice pours out a torrent of words intense as they are sincere.)

Aye, they give away poor men's lands for their clergy to collect the fees on them. And what do they do with the land? Nothing—nothing—nothing—land that should bear grain and feed cattle, land that should nurture freeman farmers and their children, land that should sustain the Canadians of this country's days to come is portioned off and gobbled up by Strachan and his clique for the greater glory of their church. The church should be like the government, holiest and noblest in its reverent office when it is bringing peace and happiness and safety to its children. Neither church nor government is worthy of the name if its powers are perverted and it turns persecutor of the people whom it exists to serve. The Reform Party asks for principles which, in time, will order the whole British Empire. They're no rebels—if they are, then so are the men who forced the Magna Charta from King John. This rebellion I tell you, is no movement against the British Crown or its authority, but a movement, by

patriots, against the abuse and prostitution of that authority by men unworthy of the Queen's confidence!

JOHN *(dogged)*: There's great truth in all you say but there's no need for rebellion and such things. All could be settled without that—there were other ways.

THE STRANGER *(fiercely)*: Ay, Mr. Waters—there *were* other ways. For years, for long, weary years, all of them were tried. Every means of lawful reform was tried—and tyranny and corruption and abuse still triumphed. The right remedies that should have succeeded had all failed. Only one was left—rebellion. No one wanted rebellion but Sir Francis Head; he created it, he prepared for it and, by execution, will get rid of those leaders whom he could not silence by law. The people of Upper Canada wanted justice, not tyranny, peace, not bloodshed. A people never rebel from a mere passion for attack—it is a people's impatience of suffering and that only which lights the fires of rebellion. That is why the patriots marched on Toronto.

ANNIE *(leaning forward, the thread in her hands; less cool than John, she is already part of the Rebellion.)* And did they win? Did they do what they gathered to do?

THE STRANGER *(The fire dies in him)*: They did nothing, madam, nothing. They were ill fitted for fighting, they were frightened, they were but farmers against soldiers.

ANNIE *(indignantly)*: And did they not fight to death for this cause you speak so well of?

THE STRANGER: They tried their best—may be that they could not, but had they been fighting for the causes of evil and oppression instead of under the banners of right and justice, they might have had the arms to show more spirit.

ANNIE: And why did their spirit fail them so quickly?

THE STRANGER: There's no clear reason, except that it took so much courage to rise at all in the first place, that their courage was all but

gone when the time for fighting came. Save for a hundred men, it was a sorry business.

JOHN: I see you've been at York when all this happened. Tell me, was there a battle?

THE STRANGER: Well, one might call it that, but never, in the cause of freedom, was so weak a blow struck. Now toadies and tyrants can label themselves heroes and Loyalists. Loyal—and they who brought the whole rebellion on!

JOHN: But the fight? Where was the fight?

THE STRANGER: Some shots were fired as the rebels lay beside Montgomery's Tavern. The soldiers had some cannon and the balls went through the house, near where the rebels lay. They chose to wait for the soldiers in a wood and fought with spirit. Grape, canister and broadsides of musketry were poured on them, and they stood firmly for an hour—to stand there longer would have meant massacre. They could do nothing against the military, save stand their ground—and that they did.

JOHN: And their leaders?

THE STRANGER *(bitterly)*: The best were taken and the wiser fled. *(All his ardour is gone, sunk in the realization of defeat.)* There's not much glory in dying by a tyrant's rope; it is a kind of noble protest that tyrants never understand. 'Butchered to make a Compact holiday'—the wiser fled, the nobler men will perish.

ANNIE: And is the trouble finally over now?

THE SRANGER: In Canada, the cause is finished. *(He gets up and turns to the window, looking out into the driving snow. John relights his pipe. Annie begins to "red up" the table.)*

ANNIE: I hope you liked the supper, though ye did not eat all I set before ye, mister.

THE STRANGER *(turning)*: Madam, 'twas worthier of a better guest. My thanks to you. Let me apologize to you for my whirl of words. I did forget myself.

ANNIE: It was rare news to me. *(She gets the house in order.)* And now sir, good-night to you. There is your couch—I've spread the blankets on it. *(She fixes a couch to the right of the fireplace.)* Good-night to you.

THE STRANGER: Good-night. *(He bows; she goes to the bedroom left back; John fixes the fire.)* It takes no keen eye to see you are unfriendly and ill-disposed to me, Mr. Waters. Before I take the hospitality of your roof you must tell me why that is. I have paid my way and properly, I trust, and am your guest.

JOHN: Rare guest you are—you come this lonely way none ever comes, riding a mighty horse that ill befits your own appearance. Is that not so?

THE STRANGER *(surveying his tattered clothes again)*: Aye, that is true.

JOHN: You come by night—from where? Where you are going I'm well assured, out of the country and by secret ways, swift as you can. You toss all this dust of rebellion in our eyes—but you're no rebel—I can tell you that! Would any honest man be glad of such a guest?

THE STRANGER: You speak the truth. Then I will take the road.

JOHN: You need not take the road. I fear you none. I only tell you now what I think. But

I'll do this—*(He takes a musket out of the corner.)* I'll keep this by my bedside to be safe and to protect my wife and children too. My ears are good—keep to this side of the room and do not steal away during the night, or I'll shoot after you, and I shoot well.

THE STRANGER: I am your prisoner then?

JOHN: No prisoner are you. But I do not wish you stealin' away in the night with any of my goods. *(He bars the door.)* Good-night to you. (*grimly*) Sleep well.

THE STRANGER (*sardonically*): Such hospitality as yours, Mr. Waters, must make my slumbers light.

(John goes to the bedroom, leaving the door open a little.)

(The Stranger looks into the fire for a long moment, sits down on the rough couch and takes off his slippers and rough outer coat. He kneels beside the couch and his head is buried in his hands. His head moves slightly and his prayers, not to be recorded here, are a confused murmur. He gets up and sits in the big rocker, draws

it near the fire. He is motionless, staring into the coals. Only his hands twitch a little. The wind blows the panes of the windows. They rattle slightly; sparks fly out from the fire-place, the wind whines uneasily in the chimney, and then everything is still. Out of the near door on the left, the children's bedroom, a little curly head is poked; it is Micky's. Little by little he appears, in a grey flannel nightgown. He looks furtively at his parents' door and slowly tiptoes over to the fire. The Stranger turns quickly, sees Micky, and his furrowed face breaks into a smile.)

MICKY *(in a whisper)*: I just came out to talk to you, mister.

THE STRANGER *(in another whisper)*: Don't talk too loud, my lad. You should be in bed.

MICKY: I know, but we don't have anyone stay with us very often — and nobody like you, ever. Are you a soldier?

THE STRANGER: No, lad.

MICKY: Weren't you ever a soldier?

THE STRANGER: No lad, I never was.

MICKY: Then I know what you are — I knew I did!

THE STRANGER: What am I then? Tell me.

MICKY: You're a rebel!

THE STRANGER *(starts violently)* A what?

MICKY: Well aren't you — a rebel?

THE STRANGER *(Who would not lie to a child)*: What made you think I was that?

MICKY: Nothing. I just guessed it. It must be wonderful to be a rebel ——

THE STRANGER: Hush, boy!

MICKY: And fight soldiers and ride a big black horse like the wind and ride in the night in dark, lonely places and not be afraid of anyone. Have you a gun? *(Silence)* I say, have you a gun? If you have I'd like to see it. Where is it?

THE STRANGER: I'll show you it — but you cannot touch it. *(He takes a single-barrel*

pistol from his homespun. It is one "taken from Captain Duggan during Tuesday's scuffle.")

MICKY *(Eyes like saucers)*: Oh! Isn't it fine? Do you really kill people with it?

THE STRANGER *(smiling, in spite of himself)*: Dozens, lad, dozens.

MICKY *(overwhelmed)*: Oooh!

THE STRANGER: Lad, you have no sense at all. You take me for a murdering highwayman, don't you?

MICKY: Well, *aren't* you?

THE STRANGER: No, lad, and, through God's grace I've never knowingly spilled human blood. Rebels aren't pirates, boy, as you think them, at all. They're poor hot-headed bodies trying the last means they know to get justice.

MICKY *(disappointed)*: Oh! and I thought they were like robbers or soldiers, only worse.

THE STRANGER: You're very wrong in that, my lad.

MICKY: No, but everything seems so lovely and excitin' when you first look at it.

THE STRANGER: Aye, it does — it's too bad you ever have to grow up, lad.

MICKY: Oh, but I want to, Mister.

THE STRANGER: Well — you'll not always feel that way. I remember when I was little like you, back in Scotland, away over the ocean.

MICKY: Did you sail over the ocean?

THE STRANGER: Yes, a long, long time ago.

MICKY: Tell me about it, please. *(He climbs up on the Stranger's knee. They get settled and the story begins.)*

THE STRANGER: Well, it was a great, fast, sailing ship she was, the Psyche. Longer from bow to stern than this house is, by three times. She was a rare sailer and the waves were as high as the hills, just as high as the blue hills of Scotland, and the foam of the waves was white and they shone in the sun ——— *(And the story-teller sees that Micky has fallen asleep. He lays his head against the boy's.)*

* * * *

(Morning. It is only a little after six, and the faint, blue light of dawn is cold upon the snow on the window-sills. The glow of the fire is very feeble. John Waters' guest is asleep on the low couch with a rough blanket over him. A tramping is heard from the bedroom and John enters, fully clothed, except for his boots, the musket under one arm and his boots under the other. He peers interestedly at the sleeper, yawns, stands the musket in its former corner and sits down to pull on his boots. He throws fresh wood on the fire and puts the kettle on the stove, which he kindles. Rapidly he prepares breakfast of meat, bread and tea. Then he goes over to the couch.)

JOHN: It's morning, mister. You'll be wantin' to move soon. Your breakfast's ready.

(The Stranger gets up quickly and puts on his slippers and coat.)

THE STRANGER: Thank you, Mr. Waters. That's a very, very comfortable couch indeed. I slept well.

JOHN: "Well", did ye? The sleep of the just.

THE STRANGER: Whether you believe it or not, Mr. Waters, the sleep of the just.

JOHN: Well, there's your breakfast. I'll eat with you if you don't mind.

THE STRANGER: I am honoured. *(He rises as Waters sits down.)*

JOHN *(a little embarrased)*: Thank ye. You're a queer one and no mistake. A queer guest.

THE STRANGER: Well, Mr. Waters, as a host, especially a paid one, you have a smack of originality in yourself. *(He smiles.)*

JOHN: The crows speed your compliments!

THE STRANGER: And now, I would ask you, that you may relieve your house of so unwelcome a sojourner, to point me out the way to the Mountain Road opposite Stony Creek. *(John is silent)* Will you put me on the way to that road?

JOHN: And why do you want that road?

THE STRANGER *(evenly)*: Because it is the road that I must travel. Will you put me on it?

JOHN *(reluctantly)*: Aye, I will.

THE STRANGER *(goes to the window)*: Then point it out to me now.

JOHN *(gets up with terrible deliberation and points to the right, the same direction from which his guest has come)*: There's your road — through that wood and turn sharp. That is the way.

THE STRANGER: Not to the border.

JOHN *(loudly)*: No, but to Mr. McIntyre, the Magistrate! That's the road you're taking and I mean to see that you do.

THE STRANGER: A curious idea, my friend. And why must I go to the magistrate?

JOHN *(angrily)*: Because you're a low, sneaking, horse-thief — because you're one of those rascals who have the habit of borrowing honest men's beasts without their leave. Horses

have been stolen all over this country and I'm doing my beholden duty by carrying the likes of you to the nearest magistrate — and I mean to do it.

THE STRANGER *(relieved)*: Oh, is that all, then?

JOHN: Aye and 'tis enough to prison you! Mr. McIntyre will see to that.

THE STRANGER: McIntyre? A new magistrate, is he? I've never heard his name before. (*slowly*) Would he be a crony of Mr. Allan MacNab of Hamilton?

JOHN: I don't know who he is, but to me he is the law of the land and to him you go. I'm going out now to give your beast a sheaf of oats and some water. Be you ready to leave when I come back. *(He goes, wrapping a scarf about his throat. The Stranger is quiet until John goes out. Then he runs over to the corner, unloads the musket and puts the balls in his pocket. He then goes over to his coat, takes out the pistol, sees that it is loaded and stands with his face set, the pistol cocked, and aimed at the door.)*

THE STRANGER: It's the only way. If I tell him the truth he'll turn me over in a minute.

(John is heard returning — he comes in.)

JOHN: Now, we'll be gone ——

THE STRANGER: Stand your ground, Mr. Waters, and keep your distance — or I shoot you where you stand.

JOHN: You ——

THE STRANGER: Or I shoot you where you stand.

JOHN: You wouldn't shoot an unarmed man ——

THE STRANGER: You leave me no choice, Mr. Waters — you have come between me and my liberty. To regain my liberty I must do a thing I am sorry for.

JOHN *(his bluster gone)*: You mean you'd shoot me down ——

THE STRANGER: Will you give me your word of honour neither to interfere with my departure nor to aid in my pursuit?

JOHN: I will not – shoot away – and never mind my children.

(Micky runs out, over to his father, terrified.)

MICKY: Oh mister, don't! Don't shoot my father!

THE STRANGER: If I lower this pistol for the sake of your children, will you give me five minutes' talk with you? *(John nods — the Stranger lowers the pistol.)* Then why do you think I am a horse-thief?

JOHN: Because you rode here in great haste, late on a December Saturday night when all honest men are asleep; this is no public road; you are a lost thief flying from justice; your clothes are torn and ragged, your face scratched and your horse all in a foam. You refuse to say who you are or where you come from. You pay two dollars for the shelter of my humble roof, you're in no hurry to leave and you're riding one of the finest horses in Canada, making for the frontier by lonely roads.

THE STRANGER: I see. But in your house have I done any of the things you would expect a thief to do. Mr. Waters?

JOHN: Your manner is good, but why do you hide your name and your business? If all is right with you, why do you fear a visit to the magistrate's house?

THE STRANGER: I cannot tell you the reasons for all these things, Mr. Waters, but I am an honest man — and no horse-thief as you think. My beast belongs to a great friend of mine.

JOHN *(laughs)*: Aye. What's his name?

THE STRANGER: Promise that you will never reveal it.

JOHN *(a little amazed)*: I promise you that.

THE STRANGER: The horse belongs to my friend, Mr. Jacob Rymal of Ancaster. Now stand aside.

JOHN: I will not, so help me! I will let no thief pass my door. *(The Stranger raises his pistol again. John steps back.)*

THE STRANGER: I am no thief! More thing I would ask you and answer quickly. What i your religion?

JOHN: I'm an Irish Orangeman but I'm nc very proud of all this tyranny of my church tha you spoke of.

THE STRANGER: And what do you think o the Rebellion?

JOHN: A lawless business — there's muc cause for it, but it should not have begun.

THE STRANGER: Do you support the Com pact and Strachan? *(John hesitates)* Tell m honestly.

JOHN: I do not. They caused this rebellio and set lawless men like you on the road.

THE STRANGER: Did you ever hear of Mac kenzie?

JOHN: From all I hear from my next neigh bour, Mr. McCabe, who lived beside him a Queenston some ten years back, he was a honest man and I admire his courage. But wh do you ask me all these things?

THE STRANGER: Because I must. I am an old magistrate, but, at present, I am in a situation of some difficulty. If I can satisfy you as to who I am and why I am here, would you desire to gain the price of any man's blood?

JOHN: Sir, you insult me!

THE STRANGER: Bring me the Bible here, lad. *(Micky runs for it)*. Swear me now a full and solemn oath, Mr. Waters, that you will not reveal my name. Hold up your right hand.

JOHN *(solemnly, convinced that his visitor is no ordinary person)*: I swear that solemnly.

THE STRANGER: I am William Lyon Mackenzie.

JOHN *(thunderstruck)*: You — you are Mackenzie?

MACKENZIE: Yes. There is my watch and my seals.

JOHN *(after a long pause; earnestly)*: What can I do to help you, Mr. Mackenzie?

MACKENZIE: Keep silent for twenty-four hours.

JOHN: I will not breathe a word to anyone.

MACKENZIE: Show me the main road.

JOHN: I'll not only show you the road, I'll go with you and guide you to the frontier.

MACKENZIE *(shakes his head)*: You cannot, my friend. By doing that you would endanger those dependent on you. Show me the road.

JOHN *(at the door)*: Through yon wood and the opposite way to where I said before. You'll not let me come with you?

MACKENZIE *(pulls on his rough coat)*: No, I cannot. Good-bye, my friend. Commend me to Mrs. Waters. Good-bye, lad. Some day we'll have that ride. *(He kisses Micky.)*

JOHN: Forgive me all I said, sir.

MACKENZIE: Gladly, my friend. Good-bye. *(He shakes John's hand. John takes his in both. Mackenzie goes out. A moment later a*

clatter of horses' hooves, a shout of farewell and he is bound for the border.)

JOHN *(calling after him)*: God speed you, Mr. Mackenzie!

MICKY *(rapt)*: Da, who is he?

JOHN: Remember him, lad — a great man and a patriot.

— Curtain —

THE LEATHER MEDAL
1927

THE LEATHER MEDAL.

CAST

JAMES STONE, *of the General Civic Department.*
GRACE, ... *his wife.*
ARTHUR, ... *their son.*
JERRY VOST, ... *Clerk in the Department.*
FRANK PLAYTER, ... *also of the Department.*
CONTROLLER JARNIGAN.

(Of course, there is no reference in this play to any living person. The play is simply written as an attack upon a vicious principle.)

The curtain rises on the living-room of a middle-class home, furnished comfortably, if not at all luxuriously. There are two doors, one left, leading to the hall-way; one right, leading to the dining-room. A window in back-wall looks out on a quiet residential street in the outskirts of a Canadian city. Arthur Stone, a young man of rather ordinary type, reading a newspaper, is seated near the mantel, on the left. His mother, Grace, a pleasant-looking woman of fifty, is on the right in a rocking-chair darning a woollen stocking. The clock on the mantel strikes eight.

GRACE: Eight o'clock. Your father's very late to-night. It is a job keeping his supper warm when he doesn't come home until this hour.

ARTHUR: Yes. Oh, I suppose he'll be in soon now.

GRACE: Well, he's been this late almost every night since Mr. Perry died, back about three months ago.

ARTHUR: So old Ed Perry's dead, is he?

GRACE: Why yes, didn't you hear your father and me talking about it at nights? —Ever since he died, your father's been practically in charge of the Department. That's why he brings home all the dispatch-work at nights. There doesn't seem to be anyone else to do it down there. I tell him he ought to let Mr. Playter or somebody else do some of it. But he's so easy-going that he just naturally takes up all the stuff that's left over by the others.

ARTHUR: Yes, he's like that. He won't get much thanks for it, I suppose. In this world people are willing to let you do all the work you want, and they never raise a single objection if they're free themselves.

GRACE: That's just what I was telling him this morning. I don't mind a man doing anything that he has to do, but I certainly think Mr. Playter ought to share it with him.

ARTHUR: Playter doesn't seem to me to be the sort of fellow who'd put himself out a great deal to do other people's work, does he?

GRACE: Oh, he's a very good man in his way, but I don't suppose he knows just how to go about all those things. You know, your father was working with poor Mr. Perry so long that he knew how to do all those things like special consignments and when Perry got sick, your father kept on doing them. Then Perry died, he was only sick a week, pneumonia, January was a terribly cold month and then afterwards your father just kept on doing the work that was left.

ARTHUR: Who do you think will get Perry's job as head? Dad?

GRACE: Well, I don't honestly see why he shouldn't. He's been there thirty years and it's all A B C to him now. Old Jerry Vost was up here last Tuesday and he said that he didn't know who else would get it. But your dad's not much of a one for shoving himself forward at all. I had an awful argument with him about it.

ARTHUR: Why, doesn't he expect to get it easily?

GRACE: I don't know, dear. But after about three days' steady argument, I finally got him to send in an application to the Chief Administration Bureau.

ARTHUR: Oh, Dad sent one in, did he?

GRACE: Yes, I got him to do it at last. You know, he's so obstinate, he said that if they wanted him they would let him know. He said he'd just wait and see.

ARTHUR: That's like him.

GRACE: He just said, careless-like: "Oh well, Grace, everything comes to him who waits."

ARTHUR: Yes, if he waits long enough. I think that down there they'd let you die of old age before they'd put themselves out to help you.

GRACE: That's just what I said. I said: "Now, how will anyone know you want it or that you can do it, if you don't apply for it?"

but he just went on smoking and said: "Well, there's no use running after them. If they want me. they'll write and say so. I've been there longer than most of the others and I suppose they'll give it to me."

ARTHUR: Yes, he would say that. He thinks that if you do everything expected of you for thirty years, you're bound to be noticed sooner or later.

GRACE: Yes.

ARTHUR: I suppose when he gets it that will mean about twice as much work as before?

GRACE: Yes, it will. But he's doing that now, anyway.

ARTHUR: And will there be an increase for him?

GRACE: Oh yes, almost five hundred more a year. I'll be able to get new furniture for the dining-room and new carpet for here, and if we're careful after that, we can get a car in about six months or so. Won't that be fine?

ARTHUR: It certainly will. You need one.

living away out here. It takes twenty minutes to walk to the car-stop and nearly an hour to get down town, but it's better up here than down town on Dillon Avenue.

GRACE: Oh, I'm so glad we did sell five years ago. Dillon Avenue was so noisy and stuffy, and they say that now it's just full of foreigners. Yes, it is much nicer up here, even if it is so much further away from down town. But then, Mr. Playter often calls for your father in his car and drives him down. He's got a nice new McLaughlin.

ARTHUR: Playter doesn't get as much as Dad, does he?

GRACE: No, but then I suppose his brother-in-law helps him out.

ARTHUR: Who's his brother-in-law?

GRACE: Why, Joseph Jarnigan, the big contractor. He's just rolling in money. The Controller, you know. Mr. Playter was just telling your father, last week, that the Controller bought a lovely new house out by the River

Drive. It must have cost him fifty thousand dollars.

ARTHUR: Great Scott! He *must* be rich!

GRACE: Why, he has heaps of money and he's so good to the Playters, too. They're going on a motor trip with them this summer. Your father told me that Mr. Jarnigan was going to run for the Provincial Government this Fall. He'll get it, too.

ARTHUR: Why, has he much pull, Mother?

GRACE: Why, my dear, he gets all the big government contracts. He belongs to a lot of lodges, and societies, he's a good public speaker and all that, and he was only a bricklayer ten years ago.

ARTHUR: It's too bad, at that rate, that Dad didn't take up bricklaying when he was young, if that's what comes of it.

GRACE: Well, Arthur, when your father entered the Department there were dozens of young men after an appointment and, as he

says, you never have to worry about your next meal with the Government behind you.

ARTHUR: No, but you generally eat the same thing all the time.

GRACE: Now Arthur, you ——

(Noise in the hall, on the left.)

ARTHUR: There's Dad now.

STONE'S VOICE OUTSIDE: Come in, Frank, come in, Jerry. I'll get you those things in a minute.

(Stone enters. He is a tall, stooped man of about fifty-three. He is bald in front, wears spectacles and a brown suit, rather dilapidated in appearance. He is followed by Frank Player, a dark, brisk-looking man of forty-five, very neatly dressed, and Jerry Vost, a grizzled, lame old man of about sixty-five, who wears a sweater under a worn overcoat, and carries a stained, grey hat.)

STONE: Come in, Frank, come in, Jerry. (*He ambles over and kisses his wife.*)

ARTHUR: Hello, Dad.

STONE: Hello, Arthur.

PLAYTER: How do you do, Mrs. Stone.

GRACE: How do you do, Mr. Playter.

(Playter and Vost shake hands with Arthur.)

PLAYTER: And how are things up at the university, Mr. Stone?

ARTHUR: Very well, thanks, very well.

STONE: I'm a bit late to-night, dear, because we had a new lot of requisitions to look over.

VOST: Aye, Mrs. Stone, about two hundred of 'em.

GRACE: It must keep you busy, Mr. Playcer.

PLAYTER: Oh, we manage to get through if we all stay at it. I can tell you, it's hard work.

VOST: So can Jim here; he did about a hundred of 'em to our fifty.

STONE: Tut, tut, Jerry, they were very short ones.

VOST: Well, you certainly know how to handle them quickly, Jim.

STONE: Oh, so do you, so do you, Jerry, and Frank there isn't so slow.

VOST: Go on with you, we couldn't no more do a hundred in two hours than fly in the air.

PLAYTER: Well, Jerry, you never would study the destinations, you know.

VOST: Well you know, Frank, I never aimed at no high positions. I ain't troubled, like most people in this world, with a wild crazy idea to get ahead and earn a heap of money. I never got married 'cause nobody'd have me. I never had anyone to keep but myself and I didn't ever want to live in any big luxury, I was just satisfied. Just satisfied, that's all. I couldn't get any further even if I wanted to and I never wanted to. All the gov'ment'll ever do'll be send me a nice wreath when I'm dead and can't smell it — I'm satisfied. I'm not askin' anything of anybody and I won't be disappointed.

PLAYTER: Well, you ought to be. Any man who is willing to stagnate and stand still all his life isn't going to get very far. I'm sorry for you.

VOST: Well, I'm not sorry for myself. I'm satisfied. Besides, Frank, there always has to be men like me for men like you to get ahead of and find fault with.

STONE: Nobody's finding fault with you, Jerry. I only wish that all the boys down there were as conscientious as you are, I never had any cause to find fault with you.

VOST: No, you didn't, Jim. You're not like Frank here. He always wants to be getting ahead.

GRACE: Well, so does Mr. Stone, I hope.

VOST: Yeh, Mrs. Stone, but hopin' and gettin' is two different things, especially in a gov'-ment job. It ain't "What can you do?" but "Who do you know?"

PLAYTER: You're all wrong, Jerry. The

government deals fairly and squarely with everyone. If a man deserves no promotion, he doesn't get it. If he does deserve it, he gets it.

VOST: Yeh, if he knows somebody higher up and if his party is in power.

PLAYTER: Nonsense!

GRACE: But I always thought the government treated a man according to his deserts, Mr. Vost.

VOST: Well, you never worked for 'em, Mrs. Stone.

GRACE: But that wouldn't be justice!

VOST: Yeh, and what's justice? One o' those things you read about. A politician's word before he's elected.

PLAYTER: Nonsense! Politicians are honest.

VOST: Yeh, so are pickpockets.

STONE: Come on, Jerry, you old Bolshevik, you'd think every man in the world was treated

exactly the opposite to what he should be. You're all wrong. All wrong. Everybody gets what he deserves in this world.

VOST: Yeh, and why is there a next one?

GRACE: Well, I suppose that is for the poor people who were cheated in this one.

VOST: Well, the place is going to be crowded.

STONE: Well, it's no use arguing with him when he's this way. Come on Frank, and I'll get you those papers that you want; they're in here.

(*Stone and Playter go out, right.*)

GRACE: I've had a time to keep your dinner warm, Jim. I'll get it for you. *(She follows them.)* Excuse me, Mr. Vost.

VOST: Oh that's all right, ma'am.

ARTHUR: You appear to have no illusions about justice, Mr. Vost.

VOST: Well, I don't know what elusions are, but I know what men are like. Big ones

and little ones. Man and boy, I've watched 'em for fifty years. You can't tell me anything about justice and politics and honesty and those things. They don't ever come together.

ARTHUR: You'll never be disappointed if you feel that way. I don't exactly.

VOST: Not yet you don't, but wait till you're as old as I am and you'll think different. You read books all the time; they're all right but you get believin' in 'em after a while and then when life don't turn out like the books and the ministers say, you start to wonder why.

ARTHUR: I don't suppose you ever read many of them, Mr. Vost.

VOST: Oh yes I have. Lots of 'em. They're all right for people that's comfortable and has got plenty.

ARTHUR: Yes, but they're best of all for people who have nothing else.

VOST: I don't think so. Mr. Stone. Give a poor man a book that'll wake him up and you

might as well poison him right off and be done with it.

ARTHUR: Oh, you're talking through your hat, I'm afraid. Dad says that he has to take everything you say with a grain of salt.

VOST: Yeh, that's like your dad. He takes everything with a grain of salt. He's too easy.

ARTHUR: What do you mean?

VOST: Oh, nothing much. Only he stands around and thinks people are on the level because he never sees the bumps in them. He thinks everybody's square because he is. Nobody ever did much to help him out, but he'll do anything he can for anyone else. He's not like Frank Playter. Frank says: 'Let the other fellow do his own work and yours too, if he wants to."

ARTHUR: You don't seem to like Playter. Dad does.

VOST: Oh. I've nothing against him. He's all right but he's always wantin' to get ahead, and ahead of the other fellow.

ARTHUR: Well, there's nothing like ambition.

VOST: Yeh, but ambition's one thing and cussedness is another. Playter's always lookin' for faults in people; he finds 'em easy enough in me.

ARTHUR: How?

VOST: How? Every way he can. You can't rest a minute; you can't have a smoke; you can't leave early when you get the chance; he's always findin' things to be done. I can't stand anyone like that. They ain't human. They're ambitious. (*coming closer*) Don't tell your dad what I think of Frank.

ARTHUR (*smiling*): Doesn't he know already?

VOST (*grins*): Yeh, I guess he does. I've told him often enough. *(Grace Stone comes back from right, sits down and takes up her darning again.)*

GRACE: I suppose you have it pretty hard

down at the office since Mr. Perry died, don't you, Mr. Vost?

VOST: Oh, in a way, Mrs. Stone, in a way. Old Ed was a sort of head over things even if he was slow in gettin' things done. He was the man the superintendent always had to jump on if things didn't go right. But he was quiet, he never drove anyone around. But we don't exactly miss him. Jim did a good deal of his work and he never bothered with anything if Jim was doin' it. Now Jim does it all and Frank Playter stands round lookin' very wise and wonderin' if that's the right way to do it.

GRACE: Oh now, Mr. Stone doesn't do it all, does he?

VOST: Well, not exactly all of it, but the place might be in a kind of mess without him. He's been there longer'n any of them and he knows how to do it. The stuff won't be so hard in a while and then the new head'll be appointed to take Ed's place.

GRACE: Who do you think will be appointed, Mr. Vost?

VOST: Well, if anybody ought to get the place, it's Jim. Everybody thinks he will, anyway.

GRACE: He's never said much about getting it.

VOST: Well, he's sent in an application, hasn't he?

GRACE: Yes.

VOST: He'd be crazy not to. The superintendent expects Jim'll be appointed. I can't see anyone else they'd pick for it but him.

GRACE: Well, I really think he deserves it.

VOST: So does everybody else. But then his party's not in power just now.

GRACE: Oh! Do you think that would make any difference or that he won't get it?

VOST *(callously)*: Oh, I'm not saying that, but it would have been a lot better if old Ed had died a while before the last elections. Then there wouldn't be any doubt about Jim's chances.

GRACE: Is there anyone else they might give it to?

VOST *(scratches his head)*: No, I don't know anyone else, but then, you never can tell. Gov'ments are funny things. They do all their thinkin' in the dark and out o' sight.

GRACE: Well, I do hope Jim gets the headship.

VOST: Well, honest, Mrs. Stone, I don't know anybody else who has a better right to it. It'd be an awful shock if anybody else got it. The boys would certainly wonder why.

(Stone and Playter come back, right.)

STONE: I think they're all there, Frank, the consignments for May and June and all those revision slips. That's all you wanted, isn't it?

PLAYTER *(looks them over)*: Yes, that's all I wanted. I'll be driving down town again to-night and I'll leave them in at the office for the superintendent. I'm going down to a lodge meeting to-night and they should be there, be-

cause Mr. McCann likes to mail them back early.

STONE: Well, it's good of you to take them down for me. I spent most of last night finishing them up and I'm glad I got them done for you.

GRACE: Yes, he was up here till after one o'clock, Mr. Playter. I do hope you'll have things easier down there when the new department head is appointed.

PLAYTER: Oh, we will, Mrs. Stone, we will, and that certainly ought to be some time this week. We need a good, capable man at the head of it; somebody we can depend on; somebody who will see that everything is done.

GRACE: Who do you think it will be, Mr. Playter?

PLAYTER: I'm sure I don't know, Mrs. Stone.

VOST: Maybe it'll be Jim here, or Frank himself.

PLAYTER: Me? Nonsense! I haven't a

chance in the world. You don't think I applied for it, do you?

VOST: Well, *didn't* you?

PLAYTER: Well, to tell the truth, I did. Some of the boys put me up to it. They said: "Well, Frank, why don't you try your luck?"

VOST *(aside)*: I wonder who they were.

PLAYTER: But as for me getting it — not a chance — not a chance.

STONE: Oh, I don't know, Frank. You deserve it as much as anyone.

PLAYTER: Well, we'll see. But I didn't lift a finger about it. Most fellows that want a job like that would be pulling strings, getting their powerful friends to ——

VOST: Well, there's Controller Jarnigan —

PLAYTER *(turns on him)*: What's that? Controller Jarnigan's too busy to bother about me and anything as small as that. He's just got that new highway contract and doesn't spare a moment for anything else; besides, there are the

elections coming—and—you're barking up the wrong tree as usual, Jerry. No — *(genially)* no, I think Jim is the man for that job and *(slapping Stone on the back)* here's hoping he gets it.

VOST: Mph!

STONE: Oh, I don't think so, Frank ——

GRACE: Why not, Jim?

VOST: Well, somebody'll get it; somebody's bound to get it, but I tell you one thing ——

STONE AND PLAYTER: What's that?

VOST: That that somebody won't be me. *(Laughter.)*

STONE: Well, stranger things have happened, Jerry.

PLAYTER: Yes, but not often.

VOST: And never in the Civic Department.

PLAYTER: Well, I must be going. Good-night Mrs. Stone, good-night, Mr. Stone *(to Arthur)* and Jerry. *(Nods.)*

(Stone goes to door on left with him.)

ood-night, Jim. I'll run those consignments wn after dinner.

GRACE: I think Mr. Playter's a very nice an, Jim.

VOST: Well, you ain't ever worked with m, Mrs. Stone.

GRACE *(exultantly)*: And he thinks you'll the new head, Jim.

VOST: Yes, he *does*.

ARTHUR: Don't you, Mr. Vost?

VOST: Oh, I guess so. I guess so.

STONE: I wish you'd all stop talking about

GRACE: Come now, Jim, I've kept your din-r hot for you. I do hope the peas aren't dried p and there's some tomato soup. Have you ad your dinner, Mr. Vost?

VOST: Yes, I went out at five for mine. They can slave me all they like, but one thing ney're not going to do is make me go without y meals.

STONE: Excuse me, Jerry, you can stay here and talk to Arthur if you won't have anything *(Grace and Stone go out.)*

(Jerry sits down and pulls out his pipe.)

ARTHUR: You know, I can't help thinking Mr. Vost, that you would make an ideal anar chist.

VOST *(lights his pipe)*: You mean one o them fellows that goes around blowin' up thing like they do in Russia?

ARTHUR: Well, maybe not that kind ——

VOST: Oh yes I would. In our country her people don't do things like that. They just g round talkin' about things and wishin' time would change. But over in Russia they chang 'em. Yessiree! Now, look at me, man and boy I've worked for fifty-two years and I'm goi on sixty-five now. Fifty-two years — and i the same place — what'd I get? Nothin', no thin' but a medal — a silver medal — it migh as well have been a leather medal — when

served fifty years. The superintendent called me up to his office and they had a neat little ceremony with me in the centre. A young fool from one of the papers wanted my picture. Frank Playter was standin' there wishin' under his breath that he'd got the damn medal. So I says to the young fellow — "Go ahead and take Frank's picture. He's gotta have something out of this." Then they all laughed and Frank's never liked me since.

ARTHUR: Did they get your picture?

VOST: Not me — I'd look nice, wouldn't I, in among all the dukes and murderers and chorus-girls and such, wouldn't I? I got the medal and I look at it every so often and think— well, I wouldn't like to tell you what I think.

ARTHUR: Well, you can be superannuated now any time, can't you?

VOST: Yes, and that'll keep me in food, provided I don't eat too much except at Christmas. But I'm not askin' for anything. I never did. Look at that hand! It's done fifty years' work

but they'll never be any diamond rings on it and nobody'll ever be proud to shake it.

ARTHUR: I would be.

VOST *(absently)*: Fingers gettin' kinda stiff now.—You would be? Oh, I guess you would; well thanks, but you're one of these young fellows that looks up to people who work, because you haven't done much. No sir, if I was startin' in all over again, I'd get some education, I'd talk smooth all the time, I'd look out for number one, agree with the big guys and I'd always do the other fellow in whenever I got the chance.

ARTHUR: No, you wouldn't!

VOST: Yes — I would — well, by God! I'd *wish* I could anyhow. But believe me, everything in this world is upside down. If you're not born lucky, you never get anything unless you make a fast grab at whatever's going around or unless you know the fellow that's givin' it away — or a friend of his.

(Stone comes back).

ARTHUR: Dad, Mr. Vost has been telling me that everything is all upside down in this world.

STONE: Well Arthur, I wish I had a dollar for every time Jerry's told me that. That's only because he looks at things upside down.

VOST: No, it's because I've always had to look at 'em from underneath.

STONE: Don't listen to him, Arthur. You're all wrong, Jerry, all wrong. If a man does the right thing in this world, he'll always be done right by. If a man does his work squarely and honestly, he'll always get what he deserves.

VOST: Yeh, in the neck or somewhere else.

STONE: Bosh, Jerry, bosh! You do your work as well as you always have and ——

VOST: Then how is it that the people that never did any work, have everything — money, fine houses, classy-lookin' women, even castles, cars, clothes, servants —— ?

ARTHUR: Yes, but thousands of people who never did any work haven't a thing, either.

VOST: Yes, but that's not enough to even things up.

STONE: Now look here, you old Bolshevik, I've listened to you for thirty years. I don't mind you going on this way because I know it doesn't mean anything. You'll never do any harm, and nobody'll ever do you any. You don't believe half the things you say, for if you did, you'd keep them to yourself. You can't tell me that nearly everyone isn't on the level and plays the game squarely. There's a few who don't, but very few of them. If you deserve a thing, you get it — always.

ARTHUR: You see, Mr. Vost, Dad's still an idealist.

VOST: Well, may he always be that way. I'm not denyin' that in a few places things are all right, but not everywhere, by no means. Now look, five years ago, what happened up at the West Office. There was old George Parsons who had served until he had long grey whiskers, he wouldn't quit, he wouldn't take his superannyation, he just stayed on waiting and when

they moved Bill MacLean up, old George thought his chance had come. So did everyone else. So did you; I did too, and what happened? What happened? They gave it to young Tedworth. What happened to old George? He just quit, took his super, and died six months after. There's other ways of killin' a man besides usin' a gun, and that's one of 'em. Was that square, Jim, was it?

STONE: Yes, that doesn't seem right, I'll admit. But at that time there was a lot of queer stuff going on, funny administration and all that. But it's all different now. Everything is run decently and all promotions have been in order. I don't believe you'll ever have a chance to say that again, because I think that the men in charge now do things absolutely on the square — always.

(The door-bell rings.)

STONE: I'll answer it. *(He goes. Jerry relights his pipe. Stone comes back, a letter in his hand.)* Special Delivery. From Commissioner-General's Office, Headquarters.

VOST: Well — *(He gets up)* Maybe that's IT! *(Arthur turns around.)*

STONE *(hopefully)*: It might be.

ARTHUR: Open it, Dad.

STONE: I'll do that. *(He opens it and takes out a long, folded, official-looking paper and reads. He seems to have grown ten years older in a moment. He silently passes it to Vost who fumbles with his old spectacle-case. Arthur snatches it and reads and then flings it back to Vost.*

VOST *(reads slowly)*: "Mr. James Stone, Dear Sir;—This is to inform you that the position for which you recently submitted an application form has been awarded to Mr. Frank Playter. Yours respectfully, John Trevor, Secretary to Commissioner-General." Well, by God! *(loudly)* of all the God-darned, low-down

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ARTHUR: Sh! *(He goes round to the back of his father's chair.)* That's too damned bad Dad. Too bad. *(Stone pats his son's hand, which is around his shoulder.)*

VOST: Of all the rotten, low-down ——

(Mrs. Stone comes in quickly, a towel in her hands.)

GRACE: What's the matter, Jim?

VOST: Nothing — nothing — but that skunk Playter got the job Jim should have had. Of all the ——

GRACE: Oh no!

VOST: Oh yes! Read that! Read that! and then tell me where's your justice, your squareness, your man that gets what he deserves! Why, that guy Playter, he doesn't know a destination from a — from a hole in the ground. And he gets it — he gets it — he gets the job —

STONE: All right, Jerry, all right. Frank's a good man — they must have thought ——

VOST: Thought nothin'! They didn't think. Controller Joseph B. Jarnigan did that for 'em. Pull! Pull! That's what it is, I tell you! That's what gets anybody anywhere in this world. Never mind what you can do — it's who do you know.

(Grace is weeping silently.)

STONE *(goes over to her)*: There, there Grace, it's all right. Now, don't take on so. I I should have gotten it, they'd have given it t me.

VOST: What! You don't believe that, d you, Jim? You don't still think that everything' on the level do you? Not now — you can't —

ARTHUR: Oh, let it drop, can't you?

VOST: I'm sorry.

GRACE: Well, Jim, I did think you'd get it And you should have. You should have. Yo worked nights here when Playter was out en joying himself and leaving it all to you.

VOST: Not Playter! He wasn't out enjoy ing himself. He was out cookin' up this littl hash with old Jarnigan.

STONE: All right, Jerry, all right, it can't b helped. There's no use worrying over spilt milk I suppose I let myself think that there would b nobody else but me in it. I shouldn't have. Yo

can't always tell. But what's the use? Come. Grace, come, there's no use worrying over it.

VOST: But — Jim — oh, it's — *(He gets up to go)* I think I'll go. *(Stone goes to the door with him.)* I'm sorry, Jim, I'm damn sorry. Oh, won't the boys feel great about this? Won't they laugh? No, Jim, they'll curse the way I want to! Good-night Jim, I'm sorry. It's darned tough. *(He goes out.)*

ARTHUR: There now, Mother. Everything will be all right. In a year I'll be finished and I've got a good job this summer and watch us move along when I get to be an engineer. *(Grace cheers up and Arthur takes her to the kitchen. Stone comes back on left and sees the letter on the chair. Mechanically he folds it up, replaces it in the envelope and puts it in his inside coat pocket. He fills his pipe slowly, dumbly, and lights it as Arthur returns.)*

ARTHUR *(coming over to him)*: Don't feel too bad, Dad. In a year I'll be ——

STONE: I don't feel bad, boy. I might have known it wouldn't go so easy with me. I've

no great pull anywhere. I don't know any big men to speak for me. I don't belong to any lodges or things that I could get to help me out. I always believed in letting my work speak for me and *(smiles)* I guess it only whispered, and a whisper isn't loud enough to get to Headquarters. That's a couple of hundred miles away.

ARTHUR: No, you need a Jarnigan roar to get that far. Playter used it.

STONE: Oh, you can't say that for sure, Arthur, Frank's a pretty square, decent fellow. He never did me any harm and I don't suppose he could help this. It's not his doing.

ARTHUR: Dad, Dad, there's no use talking to you at all. You think that because you never did anything that wasn't on the dead level, that nobody else ever did. Do you think that if Playter hadn't gotten Jarnigan to speak for him, he would have gotten the job?

STONE: I don't know, lad. But you can't hold that against him. Jarnigan is Frank's brother-in-law and why shouldn't he put in a good

word for him? It's not often our relatives are much use to us, but here's once, eh? *(Smiles)*

ARTHUR: Yes, but it doesn't seem right. By George, it isn't right! The world's all upside down and mixed up. I'm beginning to think that a man will never get into Heaven unless his brother-in-law knows St. Peter.

STONE: Well, there'll be lots of room in the other place. No, no, lad, don't get into old Jerry's way of thinking. That won't make you happy. After all, the happiest man is the one who goes on believing in justice in this world and the next.

ARTHUR: I'm beginning to realize now why there is a next world, Dad.

STONE: Why?

ARTHUR: Well, there's so many mistakes in this one. We've got to get a square deal somewhere! Maybe it'll be there *(bitterly)* if we know the angels in headquarters.

STONE: Come lad, there's no use talking that way. Just forget it. We're pretty com-

fortable as we are, nice home, steady in all ways, no slack seasons ever down there like some places and we don't owe anyone a cent.

ARTHUR: I wish someone owed us something. They do too — *(pause)*. Are you going to go on working nights now? There's no reason for it. Leave it all to Playter. He's the boss, let him worry.

STONE: Oh, Frank's pretty decent. He never leaves much for other people that he can do himself. He doesn't shirk. He'll treat us all right and I won't have any extra stuff to do.

ARTHUR: Well, I hope so. I'm going up to study. *(Exit, right.)*

STONE: Don't you worry, boy, I'll have a lot less to do now. *(Stone begins to read the newspaper.)*

(A ring at the door. Stone goes to it. He comes back with Playter and Controller Jarnigan, a large, aggressive, well-dressed loud-voiced man of fifty, who keeps his hat on. He smokes a fragrant cigar as fat as himself.)

PLAYTER: Jim, this is my brother-in-law, Controller Jarnigan; Joe, Mr. Stone.

JARNIGAN: How do, Mr. Stone.

STONE: How do you do, sir, I'm very glad to meet you.

PLAYTER: It's a pretty nasty night out, Jim, and we're in an awful rush. Mr. Jarnigan and I have to go out to his new house on River Drive before we go to the Lodge and we haven't much time. So I was wondering if you'd mind taking these consignments and revision slips back tonight. They simply have to be there and we haven't a minute to spare. It would be too late after the meeting to do it and the superintendent wouldn't be there.

STONE *(slowly)*: All right, Frank. *(Takes the papers.)*

PLAYTER: Thanks, Jim, I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you.

JARNIGAN: Nasty night of rain, Mr. Stone. Wish I could run you down, but the damn plumbers made a mess of things out at the house.

Gotta get out there right away. Meeting's at 9.30.

STONE: Oh, that's all right, Mr. Jarnigan. I'll take them down.

PLAYTER: By the way, *I* signed those slips. Jim, so you needn't bother.

STONE: I want to congratulate you, Frank; I just got a letter from Headquarters.

PLAYTER *(shakes hands warmly)*: Thanks, Jim, thanks. You know Jim, I thought you were going to get it. So did everybody else. But you never can tell — you know they're a funny crew down at Headquarters.

JARNIGAN *(with gruff assurance)*: Oh, I guess they know their business as well as we do.

(*Arthur comes in, right, with a book.*)

PLAYTER *(to Arthur, who stops)*: Oh, Jim, I'd like your boy to meet Mr. Jarnigan. *(Stone beckons to Arthur, who comes over.)*

PLAYTER: I want you to meet my brother-in-law, Controller Jarnigan, Mr. Stone.

ARTHUR *(with an effort)*: How do you do.

JARNIGAN: How do, m'boy.

PLAYTER: He's studying to be an engineer, u know.

JARNIGAN: Engineer, eh? Good stuff. We ed 'em. Keep at it, young fellow; when y'get ough, look me up. Maybe I can use you. hat're you reading, m'boy? Engineering ff, eh?

ARTHUR: No, Shakespeare for a change.

JARNIGAN: Mgh! Never could stand that hbrow stuff. Had to work when I was thir- n, work hard, nothing like work, but now *(a ttural laugh)* I've got a fistful and I'm going keep it. *(Dictatorially)* You stick to your gineerin', m'young fellow. Work hard. Look up sometime. Well, let's go, Frank. G'night. night. *(He goes. Playter follows.)*

PLAYTER: Good-night, Jim, and thanks.

STONE: Oh that's all right, Frank.

JARNIGAN'S VOICE IN THE HALL: Gosh, it's

a rotten night! Come on, Frank.

(Arthur stands looking after them, his hand twitching. Stone comes back with his rubbers He sits down and begins to put them on.)

ARTHUR: You're not going out on a night like this, are you, Dad?

STONE: Yes.

ARTHUR: Where?

STONE: Down to the office.

ARTHUR: What for?

STONE: Just to take back those consign ments and revisions.

ARTHUR: I thought Playter had them - Did he come now to bring them back?

STONE: Yes.

ARTHUR (furious): Well, why the dev couldn't he take them back himself? He's got car.

STONE: No, that was Mr. Jarnigan's ca

They have to go out to River Drive before the meeting. He hadn't time.

ARTHUR: Well, I'll be —— *(Stone gets his coat, hat and umbrella out of the hall and comes back.)* Let me take them down, Dad.

STONE: No, I have to give them to the superintendent. *(Calls out to right)* Grace, I'm going down to the office for a while. I'll be back in about an hour. *(Grace comes in.)*

GRACE: But Jim, it's a terrible night. Do you really have to go? Why?

STONE: Oh, something somebody left —— *(He goes. The wind is heard lashing rain as he opens and closes the door. Grace stands at the window looking after him.)*

GRACE: My, he'll get soaked, Arthur.

ARTHUR *(sitting down with his book.)* What do they care?

GRACE: Who?

ARTHUR: Oh, Playter and his damned rotten crew!

GRACE *(shocked)*: Arthur! Such language! Why, what has he to do with it?

ARTHUR: I'm sorry. Oh, he just — oh nothing!

GRACE: It's too bad. *(She sits down and begins reading a newspaper.)* What are you reading, dear?

ARTHUR: "Hamlet."

GRACE: Oh, I saw it played years ago. It's a lovely play.

ARTHUR: Do you remember this — *(laughs bitterly.)*

"For who would bear the whips and scorns of time
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
..... *the law's delay,*
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes . . . ."

GRACE *(absently)*: Yes, dear, that's a nice speech.

ARTHUR: It is. But — after all, what does it matter? *(He gets up and goes toward the window.)*

GRACE *(reading her paper)*: Arthur, they have that young man's picture all over now. He did a wonderful thing in crossing the ocean, all alone in his aeroplane. They call him the Whole World's Hero. He is one, certainly.

ARTHUR (*abstractedly*): Yes, you're right.

GRACE *(turning)*: What's the matter, Arthur? What are you thinking of?

ARTHUR: Thinking of?

GRACE: Yes, dear.

ARTHUR: I'm thinking of — oh — the heroes who walk in the rain all across life and get nothing.

GRACE: What do you mean? Who are they, Arthur?

ARTHUR: God knows — maybe He'll promote them.

———

—Curtain—

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